Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

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Editorial Comments

SARAH BRITTEN

TRADE UNIONS AND THE LAW —A BACKGROUND

Cecil Gutzmore
Science and Pseudo-Science: Aspects of the Class Struggle The Sphere of philosophy

John Oakley
Marxism and Ideology: II. Althusser and Ideology

Discussion

S. Jacoby & H. J. Brown
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Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain

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MARXISM TODAY

THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

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Editor James Klugmann

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Editorial Correspondence James Klugmann, 16 King Street, WC2E 8HY

Advertisements Doris Allison, above address

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Editorial Comments

THE last days of July saw mass action which forced the release of the Pentonville Five and the declaration of the national strike of the dockers following their rejection of the Jones-Aldington Report.

Outstanding during these eventful days was the magnificent solidarity actions of bus workers, dockers, miners, print workers, building, engineering, transport and other workers, which forced Sir John Donaldson to eat his own words and to open the prison doors and the TUC to come out in favour of a One Day General Strike.

All this is indicative of a new mood, a new trend in the trade union movement. It is the rank and file and their shop stewards committees, which are increasingly dictating the course of events. They are the real focal point of powerful and consistent struggle against the Industrial Relations Act and the Donaldson Court which it has spawned to try to use the full power of the law to smash trades unionism. They are the rock against which all attempts to weaken or divert the struggle to get the Industrial Relations Act repealed, will founder. This is the power that can force a change in the policy of a number of Unions and in that of the TUC and compel an all-out struggle to repeal the hated Act.

Never was the contrast between the mood and readiness to struggle of the mass of the workers, and the outlook and activities of many of the leaders of the TUC so striking.

The latter are still engaging in discussions with the Governement on economic and other questions. No solution to the crucial problems facing British capitalism which is satisfactory both to the workers and to the big monopolies can result. For the whole aim of the Tory Government and the CBI is to solve the problems at the expense of the workers.

Only mass struggle on an even bigger scale can defeat both the Act and the reactionary Tory Government which introduced it.

UNCTAD III

The opening speech of President Salvadore Allende of Chile to the Third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which took place recently in Santiago, is now available in English.[1]

It is an eloquent though profoundly factual analysis of the economic and political problems now facing the countries of the Third World, of their continued exploitation by Imperialism, neo-Colonialism and, especially, by the big multi-National firms. Throughout, the plight of the peoples of the Third World is brought home in the most living fashion, frequently by reference to conditions which prevail in Chile.

Here are some of the facts Allende gave. Between 1960 and 1969 the share of the Third World in world trade dropped from 21.3 per cent to 17.6 per cent. During the same period their annual *per capita* income increased by only 40 dollars, while that of the affluent nations rose by 650 dollars.

Direct investment by foreign capital has always proved negative in its effects. Between 1950 and 1967, 3,900 million dollars of foreign capital was invested in Latin America but 12,800 million dollars were paid out i.e. four dollars for every dollar received.

If the present state of affairs continues, 15 per cent of the population of the Third World is doomed to die of starvation. In Chile with about ten million inhabitants there are six hundred thousand children who for want of proteins in the first eight months of their lives, will never attain full mental vigour.

There are more than 700 million illiterates in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In Asia alone there are 250 million persons without a proper roof over their heads. Comparable figures are recorded for Africa and Latin America.

In Latin America, 50 per cent of the economically active population are out of work. The developing countries in which 60 per cent of the world's population is concentrated, have at their disposal only 12 per cent of the gross product. There are scores of countries in which the annual *per capita* income does not exceed 100 dollars, while in several others it amounts to about 3,000

[1] UNCTAD III. Speech by President Allende of Chile to the Third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Published by Liberation (Movement for Colonial Freedom) 313/315, Caledonian Rd., London, N.1. Price 5p.

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dollars and in the United States it is 4,240 dollars.

THE PROBLEM OF DEBT

A crucial problem facing the Third World countries is the pressure they face to repay their foreign debts. They already owe more than 70,000 million dollars.

> "Chile exemplifies the seriousness of the situation. The total annual income is 1,200 million dollars. This year we are due to pay 408 million dollars. It is inconceivable that out of every 100 dollars that flow into its coffers, a country should have to earmark 34 for the servicing of its external debt."

Speaking from the bitter experience of Chile with regard to the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT) which financed plots against him, Allende warned the conference of the threat they face from the multi-national firms. These corporations, he said

> ". . . actually seek to upset the normal functioning of the government and institutions of other nations, to start world-wide campaigns against the prestige of a Government, to make it the victim of an international boycott and to sabotage its economic relations with the rest of the world."

Turning to a programme of action, he called on the Conference to work for making UNCTAD into a permanent organisation operating to defend the economic interests of developing countries, to aim at reducing debt repayments, to fight for the right to dispose freely of their national resources. He stressed especially the need for all developing countries to work together to strengthen their own scientific and technological capacity geared to a programme aimed at meeting their own needs and not copied from that of the advanced countries.

He also suggested that

> "an economically viable equation between the vast needs of the poorer nations and the immense productive capacity of the richer ones . . . might be found in a strategy of pacification through a disarmament plan under which a high percentage of the expenditure hitherto allocated to munitions and warfare (now running, he calculated, at over 220,000 million dollars annually) might be assigned to a fund for homogeneous human development. . . ."

He concluded as follows:—

> "Of one thing at least you can be certain . . . the peoples of the Third World will not allow poverty and affluence to exist indefinitely side by side. They will not accept an international order which will perpetuate their backward state. They will seek and they will obtain their economic independence and will conquer under-development. Nothing can prevent it; neither threats nor corruption nor force."

All opponents of Imperialism and neo-colonialism should get this most valuable and moving speech.

DICTATORSHIP OF THE BOURGEOISIE

The most recent issue of *Our History*, published by the History Group of the Communist Party, is an interesting study by G. Barnsby of social control in the nineteenth century Black Country, under the apt title of "Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie".[2]

This is an attempt to outline the methods whereby the working class were controlled, the capitalist system consolidated and extended, profits protected and the immense strength of the working class contained, in the small but key area of the industrial revolution, bounded by Wolverhampton, Stourbridge, Walsall and Birmingham.

One of the key factors in this "bourgeois dictatorship" was the class character of the law. The keystone of the control of employers over their workers, writes the author, was the Master and Servants Acts going back to 1720. The main provisions of the Acts concerned breach of contract and default of duty. If the employer was in default he was subject to a civil action and damages could be claimed from him. If, however, the employee was at fault, this was a criminal matter, the worker was hauled before a magistrate and liable to three months hard labour. Between 1857-1867 there were 10,000 prosecutions of employees in Staffordshire under these Acts, many were prosecutions involving as many as 50 workers.

Employers, writes Barnsby, especially large ones, were virtually above the law. In Black Country towns the magistrates were almost always employers or clergy, usually of the Church of England.

Laws that might have benefited the workers were more often than not disregarded. To pay wages in truck had, for instance, long been illegal. Additional Acts to this effect were passed in 1820 and 1831. Yet in that latter year it was stated by the Overseer of the Poor that two thirds of Bilston men were paid in "tommy", and an example was quoted of a man who had not received one penny in

[2] G. Barnsby—"Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie—Social Control in the 19th century Black Country" *Our History!* No. 55, 30p.

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wages over the previous six months.

For those who are interested in the class character of the law and in methods of class rule this short study is of the greatest interest. (*Our History*, which from now onwards will appear twice yearly, may be obtained by non-members of the Communist Party History Group by subscription through Central Books, 37 Gray's Inn Road, London,W.C.1.)

20th CENTURY COVENTRY

In less than a century, Coventry has been transformed from a small town engaged primarily in ribbon-weaving and watch-making into a sort of booming British Detroit.

An interesting, well researched and most readable social and economic history of Coventry during the present century has just appeared.[3] The author links Coventry's industrial development and consequent civic growth with advances in modern engineering, especially those connected with the development of modern transport. Coventry's progress is that of the advance from the bicycle to the motor car, to the aeroplane. No wonder it was a most important arsenal in the two world wars of our century.

Marx and Lenin outlined the laws of capitalist development from small scale production to monopoly. The author describes the operation of this process (though not in these terms) in relation to the car industry in Coventry, in a most living fashion. The skill, inventiveness, organising ability or sheer capitalist spirit which impelled large numbers of men to invest their savings in establishing a multiplicity of small firms producing cars or their anciliaries in Coventry, ends up as a result of capitalist competition in the few huge enterprises of the inter-war years. As a result of merger and take-over these, in their turn, either fall into the laps of types like Arnold Weinstock, or into those of huge financial organisations (the power behind British Leyland) or into those of American giants (Chrysler etc.)

The description of the terrible air-raid of November 14, 1940, the equally destructive ones of April 1941, the various plans for the reconstruction of the City, the actual rebuilding which has taken place, are naturally of the greatest interest. But the book is much more than this. It provides an insight into the manifold activities—industrial educational, civic, religious, artistic, sporting—which go to make up the thrusting, everyday life of one of Britain's most important industrial cities.

A pleasing feature is the lively way in which the careers of men and women who have left their mark on Coventry and the events in which they were involved, are described.

But people connected with the Labour Movement will feel that the perspective is somewhat one-sided. While the lives of large numbers of "Captains of industry", Civic and religious leaders and similar types are described, often with excessive adulation, the men and women who built up the Labour and especially the Trade Union movement do not come off so well.

True, the Labour Party, especially its leading figures on the City Council, gets its share. But Tom Mann, a Coventry man, who played an outstanding part in the British and international Trade Union movement, gets only an inadequate footnote. The lives and struggles of the redoubtable men who first built Coventry's trade unions, Shop Stewards movement and Trades Council, receive no mention. Nor is the great strike of Coventry's engineers in 1917 considered worthy of detailed description.

This said, this book is a most useful contribution to our social and economic history.

[3] *Twentieth Century Coventry:* by Kenneth Richardson, assisted by Elizabeth Harris. Macmillan £3.50p.

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Trade Unions and The Law —A Background

Sarah Britten

The Industrial Relations Act, forced through parliament a year ago by a Tory government overflowing with parental pride, is producing the exact opposite of the results so confidently forecast. Instead of a cowed and co-operative working class there is a working class whose hatred of the Act has sharpened its opposition to the whole range of Tory policies, a working class which has now added a first significant victory on the Act to the victories of the miners and the UCS workers on Tory wage and unemployment policies. Further, because the Act was a very radical attempt to solve the deep crisis of British imperialism at the expense of the workers, complete defeat of the Act, which is now clearly attainable, must lead the working-class movement on towards solving the crisis in its own way.

The sickness of British imperialism has shown itself, especially since the war, in the form of balance-of-payments crises. Each government in turn has tried to solve the problem and failed to produce anything but stagnation in the economy. Whatever the analysis, one item always headed the prescription: wage restraint. In the 1950s when governments still hoped that the balance would right itself if a general squeeze was imposed whenever "overful employment" loomed, there was Stafford Cripps' wage restraint of 1948-50 and Thorneycroft's squeeze of 1957-8 "intended to make it harder both to earn profits and to get wage increases".

At the end of the decade it began to be recognised that the problem was more complicated and that more selective intervention by the state was needed. In 1959, under the Tories, there were government-directed mergers among all the main aircraft firms and in July 1961 Selwyn Lloyd, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, said in the House:

> "I will deal first with the growth of the economy. The controversial matter of planning at once arises. I am not frightened of the word".

He went on to speak of what became in 1962 the National Economic Development Council (Neddy) with representatives of the TUC as well as Government and CBI. But at the same time Lloyd was announcing a "pay pause", to be followed in 1962 by "guiding lights" of 2-3½ per cent.

There followed a period of great confusion in the labour movement. At the 1963 Labour Party conference Wilson made a famous speech on the "scientific revolution" which contained lavish promises of concrete planning of the economy—a Labour government, he said, would "initiate a state-sponsored chemical engineering consortium" and so on and so forth. But the only promise of national *ownership* was of new industries based on state research. The 1963 TUC endorsed the General Council's support of Neddy but flatly rejected wage restraint. But Ted Hill, speaking to the successful Boilermakers' resolution, threw in an offer to support wage restraint under a Labour government.

The National Plan

When the Labour government came it published a bulky National Plan. This was in fact what was called "indicative planning"—a gathering together of information on firms' own plans and their implications—and was an expansion of an earlier Neddy document. But George Brown claimed it as a "major advance in economic policy-making". The plan disappeared in the severe payments crisis of 1966 out of which came instead, as usual, wage restraint, this time on a statutory basis and later the first post-war deliberate increase in unemployment and the *Strife* proposals for penal sanctions on trade unionists.

The Labour government did however continue with some selective interventions—Frank Cousins' rescue of the computer industry, forced mergers in shipbuilding and further mergers under the aegis of the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation. When the Tories returned in 1970 their expressed policy was against selective intervention; this was the meaning of "no help for lame ducks". They placed their main hopes on the undoubtedly severe discipline which entry into the Common Market would involve for inefficient firms (while providing plums for the efficient) and to keep the workers quiet they intensified the squeeze, producing a million unemployed, and brought in the Industrial Relations Act.

The sickness of British imperialism will not be cured however either by holding down wages or by rationalising capitalist industry. In the first place there are, of course, non-trade burdens on the

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balance of payments such as overseas military spending and overseas private investment. But granting that the trade balance itself is important (and it is) what threatens it is not rapidly rising wage costs but, so far as costs are concerned, low investment and stagnant production. Between 1963 and spring 1972 hourly earnings doubled in Britain and did about the same in Germany. But the percentage rise in *production* was Britain 32, Germany 60, hence a sharp rise in relative British costs per unit of output.

In the second place costs are not the only factor. What has caused every government for the last ten years and more to slam the brakes on as soon as expansion starts, is that imports begin to rise faster than exports. This is not, in the main, because of imports of raw materials. Increasingly it is because of imports of manufactures, and not only consumer goods but basic goods such as machinery. In 1954 UK imports of manufactures were 24 per cent of its exports of manufactures; in 1971 they were 60 per cent. Neddy studied the reasons for this and in 1965 reported that while price advantage was certainly a major factor, "technical performance" was the decisive reason for most engineering imports. (*Imported Manufactures*, NEDC).

In 1969 Sir Frederick Catherwood, then head of Neddy, pointed out that there had been big changes in the world market—protection of their infant industries by the developing countries, loss by the UK of Commonwealth preference and a reduction of tariffs between the advanced countries:

> "It means that we have to live with vigorous competition from advanced, high-technology, high-wage, capital-intensive economies and not in the closed-trading system which took us right up to the sixties in which we made and sold everything from teapots to motor-cars in return for sugar, rubber, coffee and all the other primary products . . . We are almost the only country of our size still attempting to cover the waterfront and almost certainly the one with the lowest degree of specialisation" (Speech at Northampton College of Technology 29.3.69).

Both in the immediate future when we have to live with this situation and in the longer term when we shall be occupied to a larger extent in supplying what the developing countries order, a major reconstruction of British industry is clearly needed and only national ownership will bring this about. The Industrial Relations Act is irrelevant to the solution of the real problem but it is both relevant and traditional as the employers' solution to *their* problem: seeing that the workers carry the cost of the crisis.

The Turn to Legal Remedies

The appointment of the Donovan Commission in 1965 marks the beginning of serious government interest in statutory control of trade unions as an alternative or supplement to incomes policy. Public discussion had begun seven years earlier with articles in the *Economist* (February 1958) and the *Sunday Times* (March 1959) and a pamphlet by a group of Tory lawyers, *A Giant's Strength* (June 1958). The 1960s also, however, saw a renewal of attacks by the judges on trade unions and it is easier to understand the origins of the Industrial Relations Act if one takes a brief look at the long history of legal hostility to trade unionism.

The Courts and the Unions

For the last hundred years (with the one exception of the 1927 Trade Disputes Act, the Tories' revenge for the general strike) legal attacks on trade unionism in this country have come not from Acts of Parliament but from the judges, apparently convinced that interference with employers by workmen acting in combination *must* be illegal and interpreting the Acts with an ingenuity worthy of a better cause.

Up to the 1870s the Acts were still a menace. The repeal of the Combination Acts in 1825 till left a bunch of crimes such as molestation and intimidation which made any trade union activity dangerous. And the Master and Servant Acts made breach of his contract by a workman (though not by an employer) a crime. There were 17,000 prosecutions and 10,000 convictions for this crime in 1872 alone.

Apart from this however the judges were always apt to treat any action taken by workers in combination as the common-law crime of conspiracy. As late as 1872 some gasworkers who struck against victimisation were convicted of conspiracy on the grounds not only that they had threatened to bring men out in breach of their contracts but also that their action involved "an unjustifiable annoyance and interference with the masters in the conduct of their business. . . ."[1]

The 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act (passed after considerable agitation and the extension of the franchise to working men in towns in 1867) ended imprisonment for breach of contract, allowed pickets peacefully to communicate information and laid down that "in contemplation or furtherance of a trade dispute" acts done in combination should not be criminal conspiracy unless the acts themselves were crimes.

Nothing daunted the judges proceeded to develop a new concept of civil conspiracy and, while employers could safely combine to further their trade interests, any combination by workers risked being dubbed a "conspiracy to injure" their employer, making them liable to damages. A further civil wrong, inducing breach of contract, was being

[1] K. W. Wedderburn, *The Worker and the Law* (Penguin Books) p. 311.

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developed at the turn of the century and was one of the issues in the Taff Vale case. The Taff Vale company, against the advice of its lawyers, brought actions against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants to stop its very successful picketing of the trains bringing blacklegs from all parts of the country. It got both an injunction to stop the picketing as a crime (since it went beyond the mere giving of information) and damages for inducing the scabs to break their contracts of employment. Up to then it had been thought that a union, not being, a corporate body, could not be successfully sued for damages. Other employers followed Taff Vale's lead but the result was a wave of support for the newly formed Labour Representation Committee and the return of 29 Labour MPs at the next general election (something Barbara Castle might have remembered) and the introduction by the Liberal government of the 1906 Trade Disputes Act, the bastion of trade union liberties until 1971.

The 1906 Act wiped out civil conspiracy except where what was done would be actionable even without the combination (e.g. assault or damage to property). It extended the scope for peaceful picketing by adding peaceful persuasion to peaceful informing as legitimate activities. Section 3 laid down that an act done in a trade dispute should not be actionable "on the ground only that it induces some other person to break a contract of employment or that it interferes with the trade, business or employment of some other person. . . ." Section 4 laid down that a union could not be sued for torts (broadly speaking civil wrongs apart from breaches of contract) and section 5 defined a trade dispute. Although the question of corporate status was not dealt with, the unions seemed to have the immunities from the still existing dangers of the common law (i.e. judge-made law) which were essential if they were to operate at all.

1960s—The Judges Strike Again

For a time all went well. During the second world war the judges even began to accept that trade unions might have legitimate objects. In the 1960s however they came back on form and a series of cases—especially *Rookes v. Barnard*, 1964, *Stratford v. Lindley*, 1965, and *Torquay Hotel Co. v. Cousins*, 1969—tore great holes in what had seemed to be sound defences. A new *civil* wrong of intimidation was invoked to put inducing breach of contract, in many cases, outside the protection of the 1906 Act. The Act's protection of interference with an employer's business was found to be meaningless and therefore useless. Some strikes were found not to come within the definition of trade dispute but to be merely for "prestige" or to "punish" an employer. Actions for inducement of breach of non-employment, i.e. commercial, contracts became common and the definition of inducement was widened to cover such things as inducing breach of a contract not yet made. On top of all this the use of injunctions, which ten years earlier had been rare in industrial disputes in this country, became common. Employers were able to get an order that trade union officials should cease certain activities pending the trial of a case which might be many months away or might even never take place. The traditional remedy of a new Act to reverse the judges' decisions was used. But the 1965 Trade Disputes Act, though it stopped a flood of cases, dealt with only one very limited aspect of the judges' attack.

Why did the judges' attack develop in this way in the 1960s? Fairly clearly it was a response both to the economic crisis, the seriousness of which was now recognised, and the greater militancy which the unions were displaying as a result of 15 years of relatively full employment. The discussion from 1958 onwards of possible new legal restraints was a response to the same pressures and especially to the emergence of left-wingers in the leadership of important unions (the election of Frank Cousins as general secretary of the TGWU in 1956 was an omen which few disregarded).

Why were the employers not content to rely on their traditional allies the judges? There were many reasons. Reliance on the courts alone offered no means of interference in the early stages of disputes, in negotiations or in trade union structures. It gave no new opening for government intervention in strikes and the Emergency Powers Act was inadequate. The judges could not be wholly relied on, for their best efforts could always be rescinded by a new Act. Above all, judge-made law would not give the *systematic* control of the right to strike which was felt to be needed, it was too uncertain, not enough of a frightener.

Tory Proposals Take Shape

The first sketch of Tory proposals for new anti-union laws came in the pamphlet *A Giant's Strength* (Inns of Court Conservative and Unionist Society 1958). Eight years later the Tory lawyers presented evidence to the Donovan Commission[2]. Neither statement gave a very clear picture of how the proposals would work.

The first clear foreshadowing of the 1971 Act, and

[2] According to the *Labour Weekly* of June 23, Sir John Donaldson, president of the NIRC, was involved in the preparation of *A Giant's Strength*. The evidence to Donovan was prepared by a committee of which Geoffrey Howe QC MP, the present Solicitor General, and Alan Campbell QC, counsel for the Midland Cold Storage Co. in the NIRC and Chancery cases in July, were both members.

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the first clear thinking about how it could be made to work, came from the CBI evidence to Donovan. In view of the tendency of some TUC officials to speak as if the big employers were reasonable men, opposed to legal intervention and anxious to settle everything quietly with the unions if only the politicians would keep out, this is important.

The CBI, it is true, said that "what the employer wants is a good day's work willingly performed; this cannot be obtained by legal action". But it also called in its written evidence for the protection of the 1906 Act to be withdrawn from sympathetic strikes, inter-union disputes and strikes in breach of agreed procedures. Further:

> "Immunity would be confined to registered trade unions and conditions of registration would be introduced which would help unions in the proper performance of their functions, strengthen their position against unofficial elements and provide protection for individual members".

On legally binding agreements they confessed themselves uncertain, at first. They had "battled very hard with this question" they told Lord Donovan but had no practical proposals. However "we adhere to the feeling that it would be very helpful if the Commission could devise something. . . ." Two years later however, when they came back to the Commission, they said:

> "In many industries, procedures have been agreed between employers and trade unions and we would now take the view that their legal enforcement, with financial penalties, should be given serious consideration . . . the arguments against a legal enforcement of such agreements, which we put forward in our original evidence, mainly the danger of excessive legality, now weigh less heavily with a substantial number of our members". (Oral evidence, Q. 11243).

The great contribution of the CBI however was on the question of how the law could be set in motion against the unions without the employer himself having to incur the odium. The dirty work, they urged, should be done by the Registrar. On this they did not win their argument with the government but they did ensure that one of the key strategic problems should be discussed and they did influence the legislation[3].

The Registrar, said the CBI, should be able to require "appropriate" rules on appointment of stewards, payment of benefits (no benefit, even retrospective, for unofficial strikes) and penalties: "certain penalties might be provided for action in connection with unofficial strikes". Further, the Registrar should have certain continuing powers, including the right to withdraw registration, and his powers might include "power to instruct the union to take action, e.g. to encourage observance of agreements, discontinuance of unofficial strikes, withdrawal of overtime bans". The CBI believed, they said, that:

> "trade unions are *not* in sympathy with unconstitutional action, and that help is only given to unofficial strikers reluctantly and because, under present conditions, there is strong pressure on the union to do so".

In their oral evidence the CBI representatives said:

> "We are trying to alter the surrounding circumstances by isolating the unofficial strikers from the unions—by encouraging the unions to take certain action against them" (Q.1575).

The Donovan Commission, as is well known, decided that the main requirement was the "reform" of collective bargaining but it did recommend two important legal changes and a third one conditionally (it also on a few points wanted to change the law in the unions' favour). The worst recommendation (by a majority, the chairman being on the wrong side on this occasion) was that the protection of the key third section of the 1906 Act (inducing breach of contract etc.) should be withdrawn from all but registered unions. The second, little noticed at the time, was that all unions should have to register and should then be given corporate status. And thirdly while the Commission declared against making agreements legally binding at present it thought that in emergencies, temporarily and provided the agreements had been freely made in the first place, this might be done.

The Labour Government's *Strife* white paper, like Donovan, was mainly concerned with intervention in negotiations and in union affairs but it also included three proposals for legal sanctions: power for the Minister to order a "conciliation pause" and/or a ballot (these had both been considered by Donovan and rejected as impracticable) and compulsory registration of unions on penalty of a fine (though without any limitation of strike protection to registered unions). Looking back the penal clauses seem somewhat half-baked but they constituted a threat and had they been accepted the battle to defeat the more comprehensive Tory proposals would have been much harder.

[3] The reason everyone tried to find a way of making the Registrar carry the club against the unions is no doubt that this was the way it was done in British colonies (once unions became legal at all). But the British working class, alas, cannot be hidden away beyond the sea.

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The 1971 Act

The Tories had five main objectives in their Act: to limit the ability of trade unionists to take action to defend their interests; to weaken organisation on the job; to produce a more authoritarian type of union; to strengthen the employers' negotiating position and to give the state more scope for intervention in union affairs. When it first came out Tory spokesmen showed a fond pride in their Bill, as a net well designed to catch Leviathan. They now know better. But what will sink the Act is not any weakness in drafting but large political miscalculations. The British trade union movement, which has won both its strength and its legal rights not as a result of any handout from the employing class but from two hundred years of often bitter struggle and sacrifice, is not going to give up those rights because of any Act.

The Tories' main solution for the long-discussed question of what method should be used to stop undesired strikes was to create a new class of civil wrong, the "unfair industrial practice" with a new court to deal with it, the National Industrial Relations Court (NIRC). Actions have to be brought by the aggrieved party, normally the employer, and his remedies are damages or an order to stop the action (though this, of course, is ultimately enforceable by the criminal penalties of fines or imprisonment for contempt of court). In general it is not striking but organising strikes that is the UIP, or to quote the full definition: "calling, organising, procuring or financing a strike" or "organising, procuring or financing any irregular industrial action short of a strike" (this latter meaning collective action which for *some* of the workers concerned involves breach of contract).

Among the UIPs (over 30 in all) are some old enemies such as the sympathetic strike, and action in defiance of some of the provisions meant to weaken the unions (pressure on the employer, for instance, to make him dismiss a non-unionist). One of the UIPs however is of a rather different nature. Section 96 of the Act limits the protection for inducing breach of contract in an industrial dispute to registered unions and their authorised officials. Ever since 1906 this protection (so far as contracts of employment are concerned) has applied not only to every trade union but to every individual worker. Moreover section 96 refers not to contracts of employment but simply to contracts so that the cause of action which the courts were developing in the 1960s—inducing breach of commercial contracts —is included in the Act and this is the section which was used against the Liverpool and London dockers.

The second method of stopping (or at least postponing) strikes is the two emergency procedures open to the government—the 60-day cooling-off period and the compulsory ballot—which though they backfired on the government in the railways case could have a nuisance value in some situations. A third method lying in wait is that the definition of industrial dispute has been altered to exclude both disputes between workers and any dispute not related "wholly or mainly" to specified industrial issues.

The main method of weakening organisation on the job is to include as a "right" under the Act the right to be a non-unionist. Even if the employer has the sense to want to co-operate in maintaining hundred per cent organisation where it exists, this is vulnerable to an action brought by a determined non. To the employer who does not want a hundred per cent shop it is of course a gift.

Under the guise of a legal right to recognition the Act introduces the "agency shop" (a shop in which everyone has to belong to a specified *registered* union or unions or if he does not want to, pay a contribution) and the "sole bargaining agency" (union or panel of unions with exclusive negotiating rights). Any dispute about either of these things goes to a government appointed-body, the Commission on Industrial Relations, and ultimately to the NIRC for an order. If a sole agency dispute gets to the NIRC only a registered union can qualify. These sections are among the most disruptive in the Act since inter-union disputes, which would normally be settled within the movement, are presented to a government agency for settlement.

The bargaining agency procedure gives the employer some useful advantages. The most important advantage which the Act offers the employer in the field of negotiations however is the iniquitous provision for the imposition of legally binding agreements. True in normal situations agreements will only be legally binding if unions agree and they have been busy seeing that their agreements are all declared to be not legally binding. But the Act gives an opening for employers to smuggle any no-strike clause there may be in a not-legally-binding collective agreement into a worker's contract of employment where it would become legally binding on him. Further, in firms where the NIRC decides that procedure is "defective" the voluntary principle can be sidestepped. In such cases, against the whole law of contract, against the emphatic opposition of the Donovan Commission and in spite even of the earlier rejection of such a proposal by the Tory lawyers, the government and employers are enabled under the Act to have imposed on the unions a legally binding procedure "agreement" to which they have never agreed. Not merely is a strike in breach of such an agreement called by a union which is a "party" to the agreement an unfair industrial practice, but if any members of the union take such action it is a UIP for the union not to "take all such steps as are reasonably practicable" to stop them.

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Finally there is the Registrar. He does not have the role the CBI hoped for but he is important none the less. If a union registers, its rules have to cover certain subjects including the extent to which and the manner in which the union can control branch activities, how shop stewards can be removed from office and which bodies or officials can give instructions for industrial action and in what circumstances. The Registrar has a roving commission to investigate breaches of rule and in serious cases can take the union to the NIRC.

Assumptions Behind the Act

The Tories' belief that the Act would work rested on five assumptions, all of which have been proved wrong, most of them disastrously so. The assumptions were: that most unions would register; that the unions would co-operate in working the Act (representatives on the CIR and the NIRC); that the leadership would welcome help in controlling the rank and file; that respect for the law would ensure that any rank-and-file opposition collapsed; and that the Act could be introduced quietly with government and big employers working away quietly at legally binding agreements and very few court cases.

Registration, in spite of Carr's later attempts to laugh the question off, was important. He told the TUC in October 1970 that it was one of the "eight pillars of wisdom" on which the Act rested, and as such not negotiable. The TUC has won this fight. Already before the imprisonment of the five dockers $8\frac{1}{2}$ million out of 10 million trade unionists were not registered. The result was not only that there was a basis for solidarity but that the courts had to stretch the Act to try to impose the kind of union discipline they wanted.

On the attitude of most trade union leaderships to their members the Tories were perhaps misled by the CBI as well as by their own isolation. None of them seem to have grasped that a change has taken place in the last 15 years. Heath, in the second reading debate on the Bill, claimed as one of the reasons why it should be supported:

> "The official union leadership, therefore, will be in a much stronger position to deal with trouble-makers. Again, it is something for which moderate union leadership has been asking" (*Hansard* 15.12.70).

No-one, clearly, had told the prime minister that several general secretaries and presidents had died in the last two decades.

Their expectation that the courts would be used only as a last resort suggests that the Tories know as little about some employers as they do about trade unions.

Unions in Court

Long before anyone had been jailed there were reminders—e.g. in the railways case—of what happens when the law is allowed into industrial relations. The two actions by the judges which settled the fate of the Act however were the jailing of the five dockers in the Midland Cold Storage Case and the House of Lords judgment in the Heaton's case. It is useless for Tory MPs to pretend that the dockers "insisted on martyrdom". Their choice was to give up a normal trade union activity at the behest of the court or to go to prison, they had no other. It was because trade unionists everywhere understood this that such a tremendous movement of solidarity began to gather in a few days that the dockers had to be let out. It was also because of this that two large unions changed their minds on registration. As Frank Chapple said of the "overwhelming" vote of the EEPTU EC:

> "Shutting away those five men had cut the ground from under the feet of moderates like myself in the trade union movement. We no longer had any case to argue" (*News of the World* 30.7.72).

The House of Lords decision was more far-reaching. The issue was whether the TGWU itself was responsible for the action of its shop stewards on Merseyside in "blacking" the lorries of a container firm. The NIRC had held that it was and had fined the union £55,000 for contempt and threatened to sequester its whole property if the fine was not paid. The union argued that it was not responsible since the stewards had no authority to call for industrial action, the union had told them to stop and moreover it was the policy of the union to obey court orders and the stewards were therefore acting against union policy. For all these reasons the stewards were acting "outside the scope of their authority". The Appeal Court agreed and reversed the NIRC's judgment.

The House of Lords[4], in restoring the original position, (including the fine and the threat of further action) followed a subtle path. The Act, they said, laid down that "authority" could be conferred on a trade union official by or under rule, or by virtue of his office, or "otherwise" and "otherwise" must include custom and practice. Shop stewards in the TGWU had the duty of "representing membership on matters affecting their employment" and:

> "the rules provided that 'shop stewards shall receive the fullest support and protection from the union'. That that was the industrial strategy of the Transport Union was apparent from the *Shop Steward's Handbook*" (*Times* 28.7.72).

[4] Not of course the whole assembly of bishops and beer barons but those judges who are appointed to the final appeal court.

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It was the policy of the TGWU to keep container work for dockers and to seek to achieve that by industrial action. Before the case came to court therefore:

> "there was a general implied authority for the shop stewards to protect their men's wages and jobs by blacking".

So far as the contempt issue was concerned, and the union's policy of obeying court orders, their lordships endorsed the view of the NIRC judges that " 'advice', unaccompanied by any suggestion of disciplinary action if the advice was not taken" was not enough.

Where does this leave us? What the government originally intended was that unions should register. Their rules would then have had to make unequivocally clear who was and was not entitled to call industrial action and what penalties were possible for breach of rule. If a union persistently allowed its rules to be broken the Registrar would take it to the NIRC. Unions however in the main did not register and this plan did not work out.

The position after the Lords judgment appears to be as follows[5]. It would be difficult for any union, registered or unregistered, to escape the risk of being found liable for its stewards' actions unless it not only had a rule which stated unequivocally that stewards were not entitled to initiate any kind of industrial action *but also enforced that rule in practice*. Otherwise "custom and practice" would show that the union did allow such action[6]. This is why the Heaton's judgment is so far-reaching. The Lords may have been right or wrong but their view is now the law, and it would be impossible for most unions to live with it. The law put the dockers into Pentonville and the law (luckily) was able to get them out. What the Lords have done is to lock virtually every union into total opposition to the Act and the only key which can get them out is labelled Repeal.

What Next?

The government's reported proposals for amending the Act cannot be taken seriously. The government and the employers need amendments, nobody else. The only question requiring an immediate answer is what tactics should be used to get the Act repealed. The obvious one is that "non-co-operation" must become straight defiance of the Act by all unions at all levels. That this can produce either suspension of the Act by the Tories or an election and repeal is clear. Does this mean that unions would be abandoning their long respect for "the law of the land" and inviting anarchy and perhaps fascism? Democratic rights have been won in struggle and the unions are right to value them. But in a class-divided society the exploited class must always ask: is this law something we can put up with till better times or is it something which worsens our condition —or even more weakens our organisation—to such a degree that we cannot put up with it and must defy it? If the 1971 Act was allowed to continue to operate it would crucially weaken organisation.

This could happen not only through "waiting for the ballot box" but through underestimating the danger of attacks on union finances. The Establishment will try very hard to avoid putting trade unionists in jail again. If union members say "what do fines matter? The union is not money" they are allowing not only robbery but, inevitably, a weakening of organisation. There is no need to. Mass action can prevent sequestration just as well as it can bring an end to imprisonment.

Other questions lie further in the future. Once the Act is repealed it seems as if further safeguards for the right to strike will have to be added to the 1906 Act. Unions henceforth are going to want real security for their legitimate activities. The biggest thing though surely is that it is time the unions went beyond their purely defensive activity—and that is all that the biggest wage claim amounts to. If the Industrial Relations Act, wage restraint and all the other things the unions have suffered since the war are part of an attempt to shore up a decaying imperialism then it is time that system was replaced by a socialist one. And that means not only a political campaign of a kind and scale which does not exist at present to bring home to the people just what has to be done, but the active participation of the industrial arm in preparing for the takeover of industry.

[5] A court judgment refers to a particular case and in the unlikely event of another case involving stewards ever getting to the Lords the judgment could conceivably be different. One is entitled to argue on probabilities however.

[6] A union could instruct its stewards always to give due notice of any strike. But this protects only if the charge is inducing breach of employment contracts, not if it is some other UIP, e.g. inducing a sympathetic strike or breach of commercial contracts.

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Science and Pseudo-Science: Aspects of The Class Struggle in The Sphere of Philosophy

Cecil Gutzmore

Class domination under liberal capitalism has both brutal and subtle aspects. Vietnam, Kent State, Pilkingtons, UCS, police violence against Blacks are but random examples of day-to-day brutalities we *know*. The subtleties are expressed in the leading institutions for the transmission of "culture" (ideology) including the family, the educational system and the various public media of communication. The modes of operation of the latter are not only subtle but also often misleadingly esoteric. An example of this is the development of the philosophy of science in recent decades. Its relative neglect by Marxists is as understandable as it is unjustifiable.

Bourgeois philosophy of science is of considerable importance in so far as it is concerned to develop so-called demarcation criteria for the purpose of distinguishing between science and non-science (also called pseudo-science and metaphysics). It is useful to identify five sets of such criteria. They are as follows (i) "testability and meaning" or logical positivist theory—developed especially by Rudolf Carnap (1936 and 1937); (ii) probability theory—as developed by Karl Popper (1959), Hintikka (1965) and Carnap (1950 and 1963); (iii) the theory of falsificationism—exclusively the product of Popper (1959 and 1963); (iv) puzzle solving or paradigm theory—developed by T. S. Kuhn (1962 and 1970) and (v) the theory of the methodology of scientific research programmes—produced by Imre Lakatos (1962, 1963-4, 1968 and 1970). For present purposes these theories are not of equal importance. Probability theory, for example, if we except statistical probability which is of use, say, in social surveys, has found limited application in the social sciences. Again, no attempt which merits attention has been made to show that Marxism is "meaningless". The specific focus here, therefore, is upon the last three sets of criteria and there will be only incidental reference to the others.

Popper, Kuhn and Lakatos, the originators of the three most relevant sets of demarcation criteria, share an explicit commitment *against Marxism*. It is almost too well known that Popper has presented an elaborate apparent critique of Marx in his *Open Society and its Enemies* and *The Poverty of Historicism*. In the former work, he claims to strengthen the Marxian position and allows that a pre-Marxian social science is now inconceivable, before advancing a forceful critique *of his version of Marxism*. In the latter book Popper regards Marxism as identical with something he calls "historicism", and this thing he subjects to withering criticism. Kuhn concurs with Popper in this—for him also "Marxist historiography . . . cannot now properly be labelled 'science' ". Lakatos is willing to employ terms like "intellectual dishonesty" when speaking of Marxism: for him student revolutionaries are "contemporary religious maniacs". He also regards himself as having shown up "the weakness of . . . programmes like Marxism . . . which do not add up to genuine research programmes and are, on the whole, worthless".

This explicit anti-Marxist commitment and the claims which support it are important. They are believed to be justifiable by scholars and laymen alike; they are transmitted to students in higher and further education with all the authority of the relevant institutions. In *effect* they function to reduce the availability of Marxist theory and, as such, they are ideological weapons in the class struggle—of use on behalf of the bourgeoisie *against* the proletariat. The appraisal and informed rejection of the philosophical/theoretical basis of these claims is, therefore, a *necessary* part of the class struggle and not simply a self-indulgent excursion into conversation with specialists.

The Popper v. Kuhn Debate.

During the last decade the philosopher of science who (has) had the greatest impact in both academic and popular circles was Thomas Kuhn. A debate developed between his supporters and those of Sir Karl Popper. Interested Marxists tended to be involved on the side of Kuhn for reasons, which are in retrospect, largely opportunistic—given that the debate itself was never as important as participants claimed and given also the agreement between the

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parties as to the non or pseudo-scientific nature of Marxism. The appeal of Kuhn was, probably, that he represented a coherent alternative to Popper in a difficult field. His theory was also simply and attractively presented. The inclusion of the vogue words "structure" and "revolution" in the title of his book (*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*) was a further advantage. Moreover, the theory was capable of being summed up in the single magic word "paradigm". Kuhn, who also had a reputation as a historian of science, gained supporters in such disciplines as sociology,[1] anthropology,[2] and philosophy;[3] he also gained critics, of whom even the most friendly felt the need to try to clarify his position and to admit certain confusions in the theory. One of the most friendly observed that by her count Kuhn used " 'paradigm' in not less than 21 different senses . . . possibly more, not less".

It is too easy to exaggerate the amount of confusion in Kuhn's work: the essence of his position is, in fact, quite clearly stated by himself. He held that the concept "paradigm" included "research procedures, applications . . . laws and theories"—in the conventional meaning of all these terms. What unified them, and thus gave *meaning* to the concept paradigm, was the fact that they functioned in named instances to restrict the "phenomenal field accessable for scientific investigation". There is, he said, a tendency for each science to have a period during which a host of competing theories contend for priority (called the pre-paradigm stage). One of these will eventually come to dominate the field (it then constitutes the "paradigm" in the paradigm-stage of the science). The paradigm, which then constrains the type of debate and restricts the nature of research in the field attracts massive psychological commitment (institutionally supported) from researchers. They will tend to employ its techniques and procedures to *prove rather than disprove* its laws and theories. Research of this type Kuhn named "normal science" or "puzzle solving research" and he seems to hold that this is what most research scientists do—including the vast majority of "high-level theoreticians". For Kuhn the fact that most science is "normal" in the above sense does not preclude revolutionary periods in a science, during which the field is totally reconstituted—with the set of relevant questions being changed and new ways of conceiving of data emerging. Such "revolutions" may be brought about by the failure of the paradigm under the weight of counter-evidence generated by normal research within it and may or may not be preceded by a "crisis" in the field.

It is worth noting that Kuhn did not, initially, present this theory as representing a firm basis for distinguishing between science and non-science. This is so despite the fact that this book included a sharp and effective critique of both falsificationism (Popper) and probabilism, which do make such claims. Thus Kuhn could say in 1962:

> "Scientific *progress* is not different in kind from progress in other fields, but the absence at most times of competing schools that question each other's *aims and standards* make the progress of a normal scientific community far easier to see".

What he then saw as important was a quantitative difference between two similar types of progress based on the distinctive nature of the relevant communities. The declaration that his theory was a theory of demarcation came later, and largely, it may be supposed, as a consequence of the debate with the Popperians.

Looked at dispassionately, Kuhn appears to offer little more than a partial description based on certain historical instances of change and growth in what is traditionally called "science". He shows how certain theories developed, came to dominate certain fields and how they were themselves replaced. His description, it has been noticed, also fits the activity of such organised groups as religious communities and, indeed, even criminal fraternities. It also fits with remarkable accuracy the description offered by certain anthropoligists of the operation of witchcraft and magic in "tribal/traditional" societies, where—we do well to remember—"*Faith* and *scepticism* are alike *traditional*"[4]

Popper and his followers largely over-reacted to all this, notwithstanding the recognition by Sir Karl himself[5] and of the "ex-Popperian" Paul Feyerabend[6] that the doctrines of Kuhn and Popper were in significant respects compatible. The debate is potentially of general importance at the point where the claim is made that the Kuhnian view of science is dangerous to science and that if true, science

[1] See M. Mulkay—*Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Social Research, Vol. XXXXI. F. Greig, 1969. pp. 22-25.

[2] For example, S B Barnes, "Paradigms—Scientific and Social": *Man* (March, 1969), pp 94-102.

[3] For example, Stephen Toulmin, who has written favourably of Kuhn on a number of occasions, including his contribution to *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (1970).

[4] Cf Evans-Pritchard's, *Witchcraft Oracles and Magic Among the Azunde of the Sudan*, (O U P 1936) and Max Gluckman's Appreciation in *Rhodes-Livingstone Institute Journal*: 1, pp 61-71. (1944).

[5] See his contribution to *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (1970).

[6] See his contribution to *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (1970).

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would cease to show progress. The claim is misleading. Not only is *Progress* (scientific progress) the core value in Kuhn's work. But it can easily be shown that "paradigms" are often taken apart from the inside by adherents even where no psychological "crisis" forces a major rethink. This, incidentally, is admitted by Kuhn. The point is best illustrated by an example used by one of Popper's most vituperative disciples, John Watkins, *against* Kuhn. This concerns the replacement of the Keplerian theory of the solar system by the Newtonian.

When Newton produced his theory he was still very much a Keplerian, and, as Watkins rightly observes[7], was far from regarding Kepler's system as having *failed* in any way. Indeed it appears that Newton's restatement form of Kepler's laws (which incidentally he did initially in a passage which used the notion "hypothesis") contributed to the widely held view that the *Principia* demonstrated the truth of Kepler's hypotheses. Of course it may be said to have done precisely the contrary. From this and numerous other examples we see that, even if Kuhn is assumed to be wholly correct, science is not thereby endangered. The other points in the debate are equally easily resolved. The conclusion that the Popper vs. Kuhn debate, as such, offers very little, seems inescapable.

What matters is that Kuhn's theory does not contain a sound basis for his assertion that Marxism cannot be labelled science, The assertion is, indeed, little short of laughable, given that the largely descriptive theory on which it is based does not, strictly speaking, allow for a firm demarcation between science and religion. Nor is there much—terminology excepted—that is new in the theory. Considerable similarities may be observed between Kuhn's formulation and R. G. Collingwood's doctrine of "absolute presuppositions"—which was advanced in 1939. It is similar too, to Gaston Bachelard's conception of "epistemological breaks" —also first formulated in the decade of the 1930s.

The Popper/Lakatos Relationship

The doctrines of falsificationism and the theory of scientific research programmes are the work of Sir Karl Popper and Professor Imre Lakatos respectively. Men and doctrines alike stand in close relationship to each other. Lakatos, as a philosopher of science (he is also a mathematical philosopher of very considerable *critical* ability) is engaged in criticising, developing and, apparently, transcending the work of Popper. It will be suggested below that the transcendence is not achieved, despite the brilliance Lakatos brings to the project; it will also be argued that ultimately master and pupil are alike the sires of untenable theories which sink below the weight of confused empiricism and uncritical idealism. The issues involved may be complex: they are also easily understood. It is not unimportant that they are understood by interested Marxists.

How should Popper and Lakatos be regarded? There are two alternatives of which the first represents their own self-image and the second a materialist assessment. Lakatos appears the most authoritative source of the former. He proposes to identify three versions of the doctrine of falsificationism and three corresponding stages of Popperianism. His suggested correlation between these may be summarised thus:

(i) Dogmatic or Naturalistic Falsificationism (DNF.) = Popper_0
(ii) Naive Methodological Falsificationism (NMF.) = Popper_1
(iii) Sophisticated Methodological Falsificationism (SMF) = Popper_2 *leading to the theory of* Scientific Research Programmes (SRP) = Lakatos

In support of this Lakatos argues that "the real Karl Popper consists of Popper_1 together with elements of Popper_2" while Popper_0 is "a ghost . . . a strawman." In his view the real Popper began as a dogmatic falsificationist (i.e., (i) above) in the 1920s, but after realising the untenability of this position published nothing until he invented NMF (i.e., (ii) above).

Now this formulation of the Popper/Lakatos relationship is systematically misleading. While it is *true* that Popper published "nothing" before he

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[7] This is also shown by Alexander Koyre: *Newtonian Studies*, Chapman and Hall, London (1965) p. 30.

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invented NMF, it is not true, as implied, that he published nothing subsequently which either contained, or fostered DNF. Further, it is arguably the case that Popper's work contains only the barest hints of the third doctrine, SMF, which, in fact, has largely to be "read in" to it. The extent to which Popper continued to *believe* in DNF. is not easily determinable from his work; but it is not necessary to do so for that is not the issue. What is important—and it is almost beyond doubt—is that *it did not disappear from his later work* and that its presence is not accounted for solely by the need to state it for the purpose of refutation, which is what Lakatos holds.

The evidence from Popper himself is fairly conclusive. Thus in his *Conjectures and Refutations* (1963) he spoke of "reformulating . . . conclusions of 1919-1920" (page 36). His reference to this very early date rather than 1934 is important because it confirms that even as late as 1963 Popper saw no theoretical gap separating the years 1919 and 1934 and that he regarded his *Logic of Scientific Discovery* (1934, English 1959) as a systematic embodiment of his views which had been developed earlier. There may thus be little reason to be wholly straight-faced about Lakatos's picture of an ultra-scientific Popper refusing to publish throughout the decade of the 1920s until he created his new doctrine of NMF. The historical truth is more human. In fact Sir Karl spent those years elaborating his views—despite the fact that they ". . . at the time seemed to me trivial" (1963 page 39)—at such great length that according to him, they had ". . . to be cut to a fraction of their original length to be acceptable for publication" (1959, page 311). For these reasons then we regard the official self-image of the Popperians as *myth*.

The alternative view is a materialist assessment. It is rooted in the perception of the ideological nature of Lakatos' claim in respect of Popper, which is seen as representing nothing more than a *project to rescue Popperianism* from the wreck which it has become as a consequence of the fact that the rock upon which it rests, namely falsificationism, is revealed under critical pressure to be sand-stone. Falsificationism was developed in 1919 by Popper because ". . . it solved for me an intellectual problem which had worried me deeply, and . . . because it had obvious practical (*for example political*) consequences" (1963, page 39). In this respect it fits closely Althusser's criteria for the mode of production of Ideology.[8]

The doctrine has given good political/ideological service to liberal capitalism in that in the Cold War World it provided apparently adequate justification for the sort of political repression which masquerades under such labels as "piece-meal social engineering". This means that an open abandonment of Popper is not on: Hence Lakatos' rescue project. That project is, however, rooted in error, to say the least and the formulation which represents it is therefore misleading. The proper formulation of the relationship between Popper and Lakatos is:

(a) Dogmatic or naturalistic Falsificationism (DNF.) = Popper_1
(b) Methodological Falsificationism (MF.) = Popper_2
(c) Scientific Research Programme Theory (SRP.) = Lakatos/Kuhn.

This assessment rejects, first, the notion of Popper_0, or Popper the strawman—but for the right reason, unlike Lakatos who also rejects it—; secondly, it rejects the division of Methodological Falsificationism into a "Naive" and a "Sophisticated" variant for which Lakatos offers nothing which can be called evidence—because none exists. The rejections clear the way for a materialist criticism of all three theories, which will show them all to be untenable.

The Empiricist and Idealist Defects of Popper, Lakatos and Kuhn

Popper_1

Popper's first doctrine, namely DNF/Popper_1 in our formulation, poses few problems. It now has very few defenders: its persistence may be attributed to the fact that in an intellectual climate still dominated by empiricism it continues to be useful. It has the virtue of simplicity which means that the philosophically unsophisticated can understand and use it.[9] The doctrine holds that only those theories which are falsifiable are scientific and that falsification is the goal of scientific activity. This notion is guaranteed by a belief in an infallible empirical (also called "factual" or "basic") level of reality. This level is the domain of the observing experimenter, whose role is quite distinct from that of the theoretician. The latter makes theoretical proposals (Popper calls them "conjectures" and "guesses") and has to *specify in advance* an experiment such that an adverse result would falsify the conjecture. The experimenter, *in the name of Nature*, *disposes of* conjectures with empirical or basic "facts" together with a well-corroborated falsifying hypothesis (i.e., an explanation of why the fact falsifies the conjecture). The doctrine allows for no appeal against experimental falsification. It is undoubtedly the case

[8] Cf. *Reading Capital*, London, New Left Books (1970). p. 52.

[9] It is instructive in this connection that Popper's 1963 "reformulation" of his views was originally a Lecture delivered before an audience not comprised of professional philosophers of science.

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that all these points permeate the work of Popper, and that as late as 1963 they were being boldly restated by him.

Marxists are not alone in recognising the untenability of this doctrine—and for a host of reasons, some of which are too obvious to mention. It has long been recognised that the line of demarcation between experimenter and theoretician cannot be drawn as the doctrine suggests. It has also been recognised that the doctrine is self-contradictory in that while being based on the supposed impossibility of proof its conception of disproof turns out to be itself a doctrine of proof (in which infallible Nature can shout an emphatic *No* to any conjecture). The weakest point in the doctrine is, perhaps, the claim that genuinely scientific theories must specify in advance their condition of failure, that they must forbid certain 'observable' states of affairs. As Lakatos points out in this connection, it is "precisely the most admired scientific theories (which) fail to forbid certain 'observable' states of affairs" (pp. 100-102). This doctrine then is untenable and therefore as demarcation criteria it cannot legitimately be employed against Marxism, or any other theory.

Popper$_2$

Popper may have continued to use DNF, but he was also aware of its grossly defective nature and Methodological Falsificationism (MF/Popper$_2$ in our formulation) was "invented" by him to solve the problem, and to console himself and other specialists. MF/Popper$_2$ is a "conventionalist" doctrine because it recognises and insists upon the theoretical (conventional) basis of all scientific knowledge. The convention is social since it results from what is called the "inter-subjective agreement of the scientific community", or indeed, from the individual judgement of "anyone who has learned certain relevant techniques". In search of falsifiability Popper$_2$ goes to virtually incredible lengths by way of a series of decisions. These—and they can do violence to the staying-power of normally patient men—are as follows:

> 1) A decision as to which facts represent the "basic" or "empirical" statements of a theory inter-subjectively agreed:
> 2) A decision as to which of the basic statements of a theory are its potential falsifiers, i.e., which agreed statements are a basis for declaring a theory to be "falsified". Here the role of the experimental scientist as chief provider of such statements, is preserved.

On the basis of these two decisions MF/Popper$_2$ separates the notions of *Rejection* and *Disproof*. It insists that such decisions cannot be used to disprove a conjecture but only to show it to be inconsistent with a potential "falsifier". Any conjecture which is thus inconsistent is *rejected* (as "falsified" in this weaker sense) and the doctrine allows no appeal against rejection. It remains the case, however, that these decisions do not guarantee the falsifiability and therefore the scientificity of all theories which are manifestly useful and rigorous enough to be preserved if possible. Examples of such theories are the various theories of probability. Nor is this the only problem. MF/Popper$_2$ therefore takes a number of further decisions, as follows:

> 3) A decision to specify "rejection rules" for rendering statistically based evidence "inconsistent" with any particular instance of probabilistic interpretation. Theories of probability are thus rendered "falsifiable" in principle.[10]
> 4) A closely related "set" of decisions designed to solve the problems flowing from the conception of the nature of scientific theory held by MF/Popper$_2$. This views theory as comprised of four components, namely, a) universal statements, or hypotheses of the character of natural laws;[11] b) singular statements or "initial conditions";[12] c) singular pre-

[10] This is a rather crude rendering of a very complex question, which cannot be clarified here.

[11] Cf. Popper (1959) especially page 60 for an explanation, with examples.

[12] Cf. Popper, loc. cit.

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dictions;[13] and d) a *ceteris paribus* clause, holding other things constant or equal. The problem is that this fourth component which is always present in any research model is virtually unspecifiable in respect of a major theory—thus the "forbidden" occurs in precisely the most respected theories; the expected fails to occur; notions as apparently unproblematic as succession and simultaniety are "relativised" to complete the destruction of the Newtonian science and form the "core" of Einstein. Falsifiability thus requires that all these components are tested together which the "set" of decisions taken here is designed to acheive.

5) Finally, MF/Popper$_2$ is completed by two further decisions, a) it will be decided that a theory not rendered falsifiable by any previous decision is unscientific if it clashes with another theory which is both falsifiable (on the above grounds) and also "well corroborated": b) a decision that theories, which are "syntactically metaphysical", i e , having a logical form ("all metals have a solvent") which precludes their falsification by any single ("spatio-temporally singular") basic statement, are rejected as unscientific.

This constellation of decisions makes up the doctrine of methodological falsificationism or Popper$_2$. Despite its complexity, it is as untenable as DNF/Popper$_1$. This is shown immediately below by means of a number of "objections".

Objection i. The above characterisation of the doctrine of MF/Popper$_2$, in fact, leaves unstated the central decision upon which it rests, namely that taken by Karl Popper in 1919 to regard science as distinguishable from non or pseudo science by virtue of the supposed falsifiability of the one and the non-falsifiability of the other. The entire "life-work" of Popper, and his followers—up to Lakatos[14] has been a project characterised by *total commitment* to this decision, which they have never really questioned. They have, apparently, failed to notice that this violates the central canon of their "critical philosophy": For, as Lakatos observes without irony ". . . commitment for Popper is an outright crime". This self-contradiction, involving as it does a major element of pure dogmatism, negates the stated aim of Popper's work—including, of course, MF, his second doctrine.

Objection ii. Popper's project is rooted in a double ignorance of its supposed object. The 1919 decision was not based on knowledge of an actual difference between the natural and social sciences to which it had reference. Indeed, of the social sciences which were declared unfalsifiable and therefore unscientific Popper knew very little: no one can claim seriously that he has ever said anything significant about psycho-analysis: he has himself demonstrated his ignorance of "individual psychology" in the section of his *Open Society* . . . headed the "Autonomy of Sociology"[15]: when finally (1945) Popper did examine Marxism, his version of Marxian theory—and also Hegel's and Plato's—was, to say the least, massively distorted[16]. Certainly distorted enough to amount to non-knowledge. In other words he did not, as late as the 1950's, have a basis of knowledge for the attempt to make unfalsifiability the key *presence* in the social sciences just mentioned, and falsifiability the key *presence* in the natural sciences, especially physics. Both claims were *a priori* and prescriptive. What Popper did was to apply a model derived from traditional logic to certain sciences and say that it was inapplicable in certain others. And when he said the natural sciences are falsifiable all he meant was that *if* we say these sciences have the form of (a) "universal laws" (eg., "all threads of type x break under y conditions"—logical equivalent, major premise), (b) "initial conditions" or "singular statements" (eg., "this thread is of type x and is now under condition y"—logical equivalent, minor premise) and (c) "singular predictions" (eg., "this thread will break"—conclusion), then they are falsifiable. Unfortunately for Popper this purely logical formulation amounts to no more than a partial description of a specific research model and not the structure of any high-level social or physical theory. It thus amounts to nothing more than an assertion of the testability of particular laws (provided they are not syntactically metaphysical) which leaves quite untouched the non-problem of the falsifiability of theories. What is more, such a research model can be, and is, applied to both social and physical theory and not just to the latter as Popper holds. This accounts for the unresolved tension which has been observed in his work between the conflicting assertions that Marxism has been falsified and is unfalsifiable. A more self-critical Popper would have noticed that when falsifiability is defined as limited testability, both physical and social theory are equally falsifiable—or unfalsifiable. He would have noticed too, that the attempt to

[13] Cf. Popper, Loc. cit.

[14] Lakatos is, of course, not the first student of Popper to present criticisms of the master: some others have been Feyerabend, Bartley and Agarice.

[15] For a fuller discussion of this point see Richard Lichman's "Karl Popper's Defence of the Autonomy of Sociology" in *Social Research*, Vol. 32 (1965) pp. 1-25.

[16] This is an irony impregnated point in that while Hegelians and Plationist have noticed Popper's distortions of Hegel and Plato in his *Open Society*, few have bothered to observe his distortion of Marx. Indeed one Hegeliam (G. E. Mueller "The Hegel Legend . . .", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, (1958)) happily employs a misrepresentation of Marx as part of his defence of Hegel against Popper's vulgar distortions.

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generalise testability from a logical model to science has no basis in theory, that, in other words, science is not traditional logic.

Objection iii. The fifth decision which makes up MF/Popper$_2$ is as confused as it is unnecessary. Formulated largely by John Watkins (we must presume, with the approval of Popper), it purports to deal with theories when, in fact, it deals with propositions. If it is regarded as applying to theories then the effect of this decision is to entail a risk of rejecting all new theories. Given that most major theories are well corroborated, in the accepted sense of having considerable evidence in their favour and some "anomolous" evidence against, then it follows that virtually every new theory will be rejected as clashing with a well corroborated alternative. The previous objections make the requirement that they shall also be "falsifiable" irrelevant.

It is also not easy to see what meaning attaches to the decision in so far as it talks about syntactically metaphysical *propositions* as unscientific. Strictly speaking there are no scientific propositions —and no unscientific ones either. Propositions either have or lack a scientific/theoretical context, to which their logical form is irrelevant. Thus the proposition "All metals have a solvent" is indeed syntactically metaphysical (no single observation will disprove it). In the science of logic this fact represents a problem: logicians may wish to propose solutions—as they have to those problems which derive from the verbally similar, but logically different propositions that "All ravens are black" by means of the various theories of instantiation.[17] Other scientists and theoreticians will approach the proposition from their own problematics.

Objection iv. A crucial argument against MF/Popper$_2$ and indeed against Popper$_1$ is that their justification of themselves as a major necessary advance in modern epistemology is invalid. The problem of the fallibility of all knowledge, with which they claim to deal, was solved by Descartes some three centuries ago when he met the challenge to knowledge posed by scepticism with a new, if incomplete, critical philosophy. This neither Popper nor Lakatos appear to have seen and in consequently they, with others are engaged in a major misreading of Descartes as such and of post-Renaissance epistemology in general.[18]

Lakatos and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes

If the materialist assessment of the Popper/Lakatos relationship is correct then the untenability of both Popper's doctrines demonstrated above, represents the end of the theory of Falsificationism. It does not, strictly, signal the end of Popperianism which lives on in the work of Lakatos. The latter offers not only a fully articulated critique of Popper but also a claim to have moved beyond defective Popperianism into the clear light of successful critical Popperian philosophy ("The Kant-Popper mainline in critical philosophy" so called), which bears the name—the theory of the methodology of scientific research programmes. But it too is seriously defective, being at once more idealist and more descriptivist than the doctrine it seeks to transcend.

Now Lakatos' theory is not easy to summarise. In the fullest formulation we have of it (Lakatos 1970) the text is extremely dense and some notions appear superfluous. What he is saying appears to be as follows: Lakatos starts by rejecting the notion of falsificationism i.e., the core of Popperianism as hitherto conceived. This he replaces with the notion that theories are "superseded". The process by which a theory is superseded is represented as follows: a theory (T) is superseded, if and only if an alternative (T_i) has been proposed which has the following characteristics, a) excess empirical content over T, in the sense that it *predicts* novel facts which were "forbidden or improbable" under T—this must be both instantly checkable by *a priori* logical analysis *and* to some extent empirically verified over an *indefinite* time; b) T_i must explain the previous success of T, in the sense that the experimentally confirmed content of T is, broadly speaking, present in T_i. Lakatos makes the claim that scientificity (which in its highest form is called by him "progressiveness") is derivable only from a determinate series of theories and not from a single theory. The units of the series will include, i) the "hard core" or central structure of a relevant theory ii) its effective rivals (contemporary and predecessors), iii) its auxiliary hypotheses—to be thought of as a "protective belt" around the core and iv) its initial conditions (in Popper's sense), which serve as the basis of "models" for research on specific aspects of the theory, Units "i", "iii" and "iv" of the series

[17] Theories of "instantiation" generally treat such problems as how many black ravens are needed to confirm the proposition that "All ravens are black" and whether the observation of a white shoe, which, of course, is both non-black and non-raven, confirming as it does the proposition that "All non-black things are non-ravens", also confirms its logical equivalent that "All ravens are black". The link between instantiation theory and talk about "syntactically metaphysical" propositions is not so much that the former deals with propositions of this sort as the question of valid exception barring ("this white bird is not a raven despite overwhelming resemblance"), about which Lakatos (1963-4) has been both profound and entertaining.

[18] This is another issue which must be left unexplored for present purposes.

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Lakatos names a research programme and he attributes a *historical character* to such a programme in terms of its place in the whole series.

Lakatos further specifies two levels of theory formation namely, *an explanatory theoretical level* and *an interpretative theoretical level*. Both are said to be "high level" and their purpose is to solve the problem of the old but untenable distinction between "observational" and "theoretical" statements. The role of interpretative theoretical activity is to *provide* the facts which are *then explained* on the explanatory theoretical level of activity. Where there is a clash between activity on these two levels of theoretical activity—an "inconsistency"—Lakatos offers a stratagem of accommodation which he names the *problemshift*. This has a *dual nature*: it should be noted that the mechanics of a problemshift are effectively identical with the process by which a theory is "superseded". The problemshift's dual nature is comprised as follows: a) a *theoretically progressive element*, which is said to be present where the stratagem of accommodation, i.e., the new theoretical proposal, has excess empirical content over the existing explanation by virtue of the fact that it explains *and* predicts some hitherto unexplained, unexpected, or even, forbidden facts and b) *an empirically progressive element*—this is present where *some* of the excess empirical content is actually corroborated and some predicted facts are confirmed on the interpretative level.

Lakatos claims that the theoretically progressive element is *a consistent demand* of genuinely scientific practice while the empirically progressive element is (almost by definition) only an intermittent requirement. He calls this stipulation a demand for *continuous theoretical growth in science* and substitutes this for the traditional criteria of "unity" and "beauty", though not "simplicity"—as the latter is thought to be spurious as most systems of explanation involve different sorts of difficulty and simplicity. For Lakatos a problemshift may be either *progressive* (where *both* theoretically and empirically progressive elements are present) or *scientific* (where only the theoretical element is progressive) or degenerating (where neither element is progressive). The primacy of the notion *progressive* is held by Lakatos to guarantee . . . "the historical fact of the relative autonomy of *theoretical* science".

Such is the theory of the methodology of scientific research programmes, which, as already suggested, is but Popperianism without falsificationism. Looked at in detail it bears considerable resemblances to Kuhn's theory.

Confused Theory

Lakatos' theory is, despite the cogency of the formulation, ultimately confused and untenable. It also represents a curious irony in the development of Popperianism because by the demarcation criteria which it advances, Marxism can be shown to be *progressive*. Thus, although Lakatos, as quoted at the beginning of the present paper, thinks he has shown the weakness of Marxism, he has, in fact, shown the contrary. Historical materialism, if we choose to regard it as a research programme with a historical character of the order described by Lakatos, is an example of an unsuperseded T. Its predecessors are no longer rivals. Even Sir Karl grants that a pre-Marxian social science is now inconceivable. What is the contemporary theory, T_i, with greater explanatory theoretical power than historical materialism? It is incumbent upon Lakatos to identify such a theory and to show that it has overcome the problems of social prediction. In its latest formulation, then, Popperianism contradicts the central aim of the programme, namely to show certain social sciences, and particularly Marxism, to be unscientific. But Marxism does not need this victory by default. The materialist assessment of Popperianism therefore proceeds to show the untenability of SRP/Lakatos. It is argued that:

1) SRP/Lakatos is a totally descriptivist theory.[19] The method underlying Lakatos' theory is in reality a dialogue between two modes of description—between, on the one hand, a "*rational reconstruction*" of the history of a science, and on the other, a description of its *actual history*. The dialogue takes the form of a criticism of the one for *a lack of historicity* and the other for *a lack of rationality*. It will be apparent that such a procedure can amount to little more than a more or less interesting juxtaposition of a *schematic* and a *detailed* description. As a theoretical approach it is certainly not immediately justifiable: indeed Lakatos clearly once thought so, for in 1962 he observed that:

> "My respectable historian colleagues sometimes say that the sort of 'rational reconstruction' here attempted is a caricature of real history; but one might equally well say that real history is a caricature of its rational reconstruction".

This clever response was not an answer to the problem of the rationality/reality dichotomy which his descriptivism posed: the problem remained with him throughout his 1963-4 work where the "real history" only "chimed" in in the footnotes. His solution, when it finally came took the form of:

2) An extraordinarily audacious flight of idealist fancy. His "rational reconstruction", we were told, takes place "essentially in the world of ideas, in Plato's and Popper's "third world' " which is quite distinct from the "first world, . . . the material world". It is different too, from the "second . . .

[19] Paul Hirst, in an article in *Theoretical Practice*, No. 2, pp. 19-20 made this point in respect of Lakatos, without, however, *arguing* it.

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world, that of consciousness".[20] This represents a headlong retreat from modern scientific discourse to Platonism. Such justification as is offered by Lakatos is simply an invocation of Popper and Toulmin. Now there is no need to reject Plato out of hand: his world of forms or ideas had a clear methodological purpose in that it enabled him to deal very subtly with the problem of the multiple levels/modes of abstraction to be encountered in philosophical discourse at a time when philosophy was part of a considerably less differentiated intellectual universe. Plato *appears* to have confused or at least conflated talk about levels/modes of abstraction with modes/levels of reality, which may have been a consequence of the state of philosophical discourse then current. It is no longer the case that such justifications hold and thus any procedure which *now* talks of the material world as simply the lowest level of a triple-ordered reality can have little adequacy. It is a distinctly pre-Hegeliam idealism.

3) SRP/Lakatos does not distinguish adequately between *major* and *minor* changes in the structure of a science. In this respect it shares with Popper the sort of terminological crudity which allows the notions, "guesses" or "conjecture" to denote all types and scales of theoretical suggestions and theories. In SRP. the notion "theoretically progressive problemshift" names both the revolution and the reform in science.

4) SRP/Lakatos is characterised by *post hoc* judgements. We are told that ". . . crucial counter-evidence—or crucial experiments—can be recognised among the scores of anomalies *only* with hindsight, in the light of a superseding theory". It may well be that some degree of *post hocness* is a feature of scientific practice but in Lakatos the *post hoc* is also "*ad hoc*". This element of *ad hocness* springs from the fact that Lakatos offers no clear way of distinguishing between his interpretative and his explanatory levels of theoretical activity. The latter appears to amount to little more than a reformulation of Popper's notion of "spatio-temporally singular falsifiers and well corroborated falsifying hypothesis". As such, the advance is merely terminological. When Lakatos observes that the interpretative level may be quite as high as the explanatory level, we begin to suspect the entire formulation. This suspicion is confirmed by the related defect of the theory, that:

5) Lakatos' claim that his theory accounts for the relative autonomy of theoretical science is unsubstantiated—indeed substantiation appears impossible. For if, as he tells us, *all* science is *theoretical*, with two equally high levels of theoretical activity, then the claim is vacuous—there being no non-theoretical science. If, on the other hand, he refers solely to *explanatory theoretical science* as relatively autonomous, then it is precisely this which is unsupportable from his theory. Unsupportable because for Lakatos the "problem is which theory to consider as the interpretative one, which provides the 'hard' facts and which the explanatory one, which 'tentatively' explains them". In other words the claim relates to the unknown about which it does not help to make this type of claim.

[20] Cf. Lakatos, (1970), pp. 179-180, and ff.1. p. 180.

Conclusion

The foregoing materialist assessment of current demarcation criteria in philosophy of science reveals that none of those proposed represents theoretically adequate grounds for the often made claim that Marxism is not a science. Indeed it has revealed that some of these criteria are not firm enough to form a basis for distinguishing—other than intuitively—between what is traditionally called science (natural or social) and religion or, indeed magic and crime. The Popperian programme is revealed as untenable, as well as unnecessary in terms of the history of the theory of knowledge. Popperianism, in the hands of Lakatos can now be used to show the progressive nature of Marxism. The wheel has, thus, come full circle in this respect. Popperianism has, however, become more empiricist, more descriptivist and uncritically idealist. It is therefore rejected in total. This is a negative result in philosophy but a positive materialist result in terms of the political and ideological implications of the theories involved. It should go without saying, of course, that the above demonstration of the untenability of the basis of certain counter-claims against Marxian theory *does not* amount to a demonstration of its scientificity.

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Marxism and Ideology: II Althusser and Ideology

John Oakley

To set in order—that's the task,
Both Eros and Apollo ask;
For Art and Life agree in this,
That each intends a synthesis,
That order which must be the end
That all self-loving things intend
Who struggle for their liberty,
Who use, that is, their will to be.

W. H. Auden.

The preceding piece has something of a period flavour. The apparent arrogance of having it printed now is extenuated, if at all, by offering it as a testimony that at least one member of the CPGB has read Althusser to possible advantage before the appearance of John Lewis's uncomprehending contributions and before the habit of peppering the pages of *Marxism Today* with disparaging references to his work had rigidified into a nervous tic.[1]

For the period flavour exposes whatever it excludes; at a time when articles on Marcuse proliferated, the essential character of his achievement (and it *is* an achievement) was seen not as a contribution to *knowledge*, to the extension of Marxism as the science of the social formation as a whole, or to be argued as such, but as the articulating of an *ideology* —an ideology otherwise implicit in practices, particularly, it was suggested, in *literary practice*. And this was essentially an Althusserian perspective here, of course, in an Althusserian vocabulary. Althusser provided the criterion for recognising the ideological in Marcuse in the Hegelian (or possibly "Hegelian", for we are not as such concerned with Hegel) and idealist manner in which the dominant contradiction was conceived in that it seemed a fatalist inversion of the dialectic from an earlier ideology, that of mechanical materialism:

> —the German Social-Democrats at the end of the nineteenth century imagined that they would shortly be promoted to socialist triumph by virtue of belonging to the most powerful capitalist state, then undergoing rapid economic growth, just as they were experiencing rapid electoral growth (such co-incidences do occur—). They obviously saw History as progressing by *the other side*, the good side with the greatest *economic development*, the greatest growth, with *its contradiction reduced to its purest form* (the contradiction between Capital and Labour) so they forgot—that, in fact, this simple quintessence of *contradiction* was quite simply *abstract*: the real contradiction was so much one with its "circumstances" that is was discernible, identifiable and manipulatable *through them and in them*.[2]

To suggest that Marcuse has rendered Marxist *ideology* rather than Marxist *science* has to do with the distinctions and relations that Althusser establishes between them for he is primarily engaged with scientificity and with Marxism as a scientific entity. It is in the context of this that all his concern with the "break", with humanism and so forth make sense. They don't make sense outside it and as John Lewis nowhere mentions it (like discussing Freud without reference to the unconscious), it would seem useful to look at Althusser's understanding of science and then, by contrast, at ideology and finally at the implications of this for artistic practice.

Thus ideological practice is contrasted with theoretical practice, philosophy with knowledge, and the central concern of Louis Althusser is with the *scientific* as against the *ideological* possibilities of Marxism. The derivation of scientific materialism (that is of "history"[3], of the social formation—"a concept denoting 'society' so called"[4] is seen as comparable to the earlier emergence of mathematics and the natural sciences[5].

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[1] e.g. James Harvey, "The Prison Notebooks of Gramsci", *Marxism Today*, vol. 15, no. 12 (1971).

[2] Louis Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination", *For Marx*, trans. Brewster (London, 1969), p. 98.

[3] "In the slightly odd phrase 'historical materialism' (we don't use the phrase 'chemical materialism' to designate chemistry) the word materialism registers both the initial rupture with the idealism of the philosophies of history and the installation of scientificity with respect to history". Louis Althusser, "Lenin and Philosophy" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Brewster, (London, 1971), p. 44.

[4] Althusser, *For Marx*, p. 251.

[5] *ibid.*, pp. 13-14 and in "Lenin and Philosophy", op. cit., p. 42 ff.

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Common to these continents is a generative structure whereby the concepts and metaphors of philosophy are re-enlisted within knowledge; their relations are transformed and their context is changed. This transition is charted by a *reading* of practice, by a distinguishing of a new theoretical environment (the *problematic*). And this has consequences for philosophy; it transforms its assumptions and subsequent philosophy frames questions or excludes issues different from those where the science had its genesis. Thus, for instance:

> If the birth of something like a Marxist philosphy is ever to be possible, it would seem that it must be from the very generation of this science, a quite original sister certainly, but in its very strangeness a sister to the existing sciences, after the long interval which always divides a philosophical re-organisation from the scientific revolution which induced it. [6]

The Marxian Totality

His readings establish therefore the specificity of the *Marxian* totality or of the *Marxian* dialectic from an Hegelian one, as distinct, that is, from the context in which they have their most immediate provenance. This paradigm for the emergence of theoretical practice, a new scientific continent, is reproduced at several *levels* in particular *disciplines*. Historical materialism examines three regional strata of practice composing the social formation; economic, political and cultural practice. These are themselves in a dialectical relationship to one another and, for Althusser, the *Marxian* totality is that of "an objective complex whole with a plurality of specific levels of structure with a 'dominant' in the last instance, the economy".[7] The orderings of these various practices, the several disciplines, that is appropriate each to its *world*, are possibly "pregnant with a half silent theory"[8] in a manner analogous to Marxist practice itself. Ruminations upon science, upon theoretical practice generally and upon history, upon Marxist theoretical practice and upon the levels of economic, political and cultural practice are mutually informative. Indeed, Althusser has located his own work "at the *actual* meeting taking place before our eyes of the conceptual elaboration of the philosophical principles contained in the study of Marx on the one hand, and, on the other, of certain (substantially structuralist) works".[9] To sum up, the discipline of Marxism and the disciplines of the levels *critically engage*.

This is clearly shown in the treatment of psychoanalysis where Althusser's interest differs markedly from that of Marcuse and which, for him, is seen as a region to be articulated within historical materialism although "On the other hand, it is probable that Freud's discovery has opened up a new continent, one we are only just beginning to explore"[10]. The analogy is explicit, "for, like all inventors, Freud was forced to think his discovery in existing theoretical concepts designed for other purposes (was not Marx, too, forced to think his discovery in certain Hegelian concepts?)".[11] He briefly traces the sources of the Freudian concepts in the scientific, ideological, artistic and other practices of the nineteenth century and praises Lacan who linguistically establishes their sufficient autonomy from this cultural hinterland. The "ideology behind" Freud, like the "ideology behind" Marx, is therefore not his "secret", the pre-condition of his truth; it is that from which he must be *saved*. The autonomy of a science is the autonomy of its object; theoretically to delineate a science is, in the first instance, satisfactorilly to differentiate its object and "It is here that Lacan intervenes: he defends the irreducibility of analysis against those 'reductions' and deviations which dominate most contemporary theoretical interpretations; he defends the irreducibility, which means the *irreducibility of the object*".[12]

There emerges therefore not only the dialectic of practice and theory, of political idiom and political thought, of the dreamer and the analyst, but of levels to one another, of theoretical practices to one another. An ideology, the ideology of social democracy, is "distanced" by the action of the Russian masses in November and a phrase, a phrase from military strategy, is expropriated to "think" it in the Leninist notion of the "weakest link": Marxist theory is enacted: Althusser will articulate the enactment. And the dream is the critic of "reality"; the analyst is the critic of the dream; Lacan theorises the analytic practice and is given a context by Althusser. But the analyst provides a critical reading of the dream for:

> Freud himself said that everything depended on language. Lacan makes this more precise: "the discourse of the unconscious is structured like a language"[13].

and he organises its symbolism and establishes its reference, its internal self-clarification, its external

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[6] *ibid.*, p. 44.

[7] Nicos Poulantzas, "Marxist Political Theory in Great Britain", *New Left Review 43* (May 1967).

[8] Althusser, "Freud and Lacan", op. cit., p. 184.

[9] In "*Theorie*" Collection, end papers, quoted by Ben Brewster, "Presentation of Althusser", *New Left Review 41* (January 1967), p. 12.

[10] Althusser, "Lenin and Philosophy", op. cit., p. 42.

[11] Althusser, "Freud and Lacan", *ibid.*, p. 11.

[12] *ibid.*, p. 187.

[13] *ibid.*, p. 191.

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allusion: he requires an assent. The Althusserian "reading" is not the teleological reading of the essence exemplified in its stages. It is the reading of the analyst—or the literary critic.

Dialectic and its Use

For Althusser, unlike Marcuse, the value of psycho-analysis lies not in its providing an ideological reinforcement to Marxism, a matter of parallelling the stories of man's mythical "alienation" autogenetically and phylogentically, but rather of helping us to understand the role of ideology as such. This is revealed in his borrowing from Freud the concept of over-determination precisely to distinguish between Marx and the "ideological" contradiction of Hegel, of mechanical materialism and, for that matter, of Marcuse himself. As Ben Brewster puts it;

> The use of "over-determination" is an example of Althusser's debt to the practice of psycho-analysis. Freud used this term to describe (among other things) the representation of dream thoughts in images privileged by their condensation of a number of thoughts in a single image (condensation/*Verdichtung*), or by the transference of psychic energy, from a particularly potent thought to apparently trivial images (displacement/*Verschiebung—Vorstellung*). Althusser uses the same term to describe the effects of the contradictions in each practice constituting the social formation on the social formation as a whole and hence back on each practice and each contradiction, defining the patterns of dominance and subordination, antagonism and non-antagonism of the contradictions in the structure in dominance in any given moment.[14]

It is a borrowing that draws attention to the character of a major social contradiction as being *like* the images in a dream (or a poem), as being in a situation seen to be revolutionary, the summation of various, *specific* contradictions. It is not the other way about; it is not that the various, specific contradictions can be assured given the other. The Marxist dialectic is *always*, in this way, a *specific* shaping; a way of best talking about the relationship between this practice and that, this social group and that social group, this novel and that novel, these aspects and those of a society, these aspects and those of a tragedy. The dialectic is not immanent in practices; it is how they might be said to be structured. As Galvano della Volpe, whose concerns parallelled those of Althusser, has expressed it in an essay "Marx and the Secret of Hegel" (subtitled tellingly "Introduction to some problems of Marxist Philology") the Marxist use is not one of "exemplifying the dialectic" (dialettizzare) but an ordering of real relations between real things:

To sum up, we must accept the view that to make use of the dialectic makes sense only in so far as we *use the dialectic* (i.e. unify) when *dividing*, i.e. *classifying in the concrete*; but for that reason it makes no sense if we use the dialectic externally, abstractly, in relation to "examples" i.e. facts, which, *as such*, already *presuppose* the dialectic of which they, as such, have to be and are the manifestation and *realisation*. In the best of cases, it is an innocuous duplicate, an irrelevance, *a use of metaphor*; as happens in the case of Marx's "flirtations", those of the self-critical Marx.[15]

Compare this however with Marcuse's use of the dialectic in a passage quoted earlier where he talks of how "The *fundamental* antagonism between sex and social utility—itself the *reflex* of the conflict between pleasure *principle* and reality *principle*—is blurred by the progressive encroachment of the reality principle on the pleasure principle." (my italics). It is not unfair to Marcuse to say that this ". . . reduction of *all* the elements which make up the concrete life of an historical epoch . . . to *one* principle of internal unity" is representative of his method—but also, it must be said of his *strength*. This abstract dialectic is compellingly evocative; Wagnerian, perhaps, as Edmund Wilson thought the dialectic always was.[16]

Althusser and Ideology

It would be valuable at this point to examine rather more closely what Althusser understands by ideology, because some distinctions need to be made when talking about Marcuse as ideological in this way. One should mention first his stress on the *materiality* of ideology and he observes that "the reproduction of labour power . . . reveals as its *sine qua non* not only the reproduction of its skills but also its subjection to the ruling ideology or the 'practice' of that ideology with the proviso that it is not enough to say 'not only but also' for it is clear that it is *in the forms and under the forms of ideological subjection that provision is made for the reproduction of the skills of labour power*".[17]

The social relations that obtain within the educational system, for example, *are* that ideological system to which an emergent labour power is subject; as much an aspect of the materiality of ideology as the words on a page, although "Naturally . . . the ascriptions of the adjective 'material' in my

[14] Brewster "Glossary" to *For Marx*, p.253.

[15] Galvano della Volpe, *Unanesimo Positivo e Emancipazioni Marxista* (Milan, 1963) unpub. trans. G. Merkin.

[16] Edmund Wilson, *To the Finland Station* (New York, 1940), pp. 190-1.

[17] Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", *Lenin and Philosophy*, p. 128.

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proposition will be affected by different modalities".[18] But plainly we are not concerned in this case with "subjection to the ruling ideology", we are concerned (and this may seem either paradoxical or unexceptionable so loosely is the word used) with a Marxist ideology and if we are to pursue an Althusserian analysis beyond simply recognising it *as* ideology we must point to that materiality in which it subsists, assuming that is, that such a materiality is more than its own black print.

The power of *Eros and Civilisation* lies precisely in the sense it gives us of having delineated something we *recognise* and we recognise it because it is, in the most narrow sense, a *literary ideology*. The mention of Blake and Auden earlier was scarcely a matter of colouring. In talking of Freud, Althusser speaks of his "theoretical solitude" and how he "had to think his discovery and his practice in imported concepts, concepts borrowed from the thermodynamic physics then dominant, from the political economy and biology of his time" and:

> —his only forerunners writers—Sophocles, Shakespeare, Moliére, Goethe—or proverbs etc. Theoretically, Freud set up in business alone: producing his own "home-made" concepts under the protection of imported concepts borrowed from the sciences as they existed, and it should be said, from within the horizons of the ideological world in which these concepts swam.[19]

Of Auden, for instance, it could be said that Freud is recomposed into his literary antecedents and becomes part of an ideological hinterland (which includes a literary reception of Blake) "quoted into"[20] the poetry. The problem of fiction and ideology is frequently complicated by the fact that the ideology in question is often a literary one, a product primarily of past fiction itself—even when it has been part of the time elsewhere.

Art and Ideology

When we say that there is something delineated that we recognise, we have hit upon an important attribute of ideology for "At work in this reaction is the ideological *recognition* function which is one of the two functions of ideology as such—in no sense does it give us scientific *knowledge*—The existence of ideology and the hailing or interpellation of subjects are one and the same thing"[21]. Marcuse's work, then, is the delineation of an ideology which normally materialises in literature and which defines itself as ideology by the character of its reasoning and by its capacity for being recognised. But before this is substantiated (in so far as it can be) by examination of a poem, it is necessary to consider how we should *see* the ideology in the poem and here again, in the area of "aesthetics", Althusser is explicitly helpful (explicitly, because the implications of extrapolating the methods used in his approach to the practice of psycho-analysis to the practice of literary criticism, although not articulated, are immediately obvious and would suggest a fresh start in this area). On one thing he is clear straight away in that "*I do not rank real art among the ideologies*, although art does have a quite particular and specific relationship with ideology".[22] This relationship is analogous to that which obtains in the case of scientific knowledge or political practice in that art relates to an informing ideology and the ideology is a reference for meaning but it does not "manifest" or "exemplify" it, and it "realises" it only in the sense that literary criticism has *in practice* redefined that fragment of the idealist idiom; for literary criticism has *in practice* done to its philosophical hinterland what Marxism and Freudianism have done to theirs in that:

> We know that *Marx did not retain the terms of the Hegelian model of society and "invert" them.* He substituted other, only distantly related terms for them. Furthermore, he overhauled the connection which had previously ruled over the terms. For Marx, both *terms* and *relation* changed in nature and sense.[23]

Ideology is not the "secret of" scientific knowledge, then—not even of that scientific knowledge that has *fiction* as its subject (literary criticism)—and it is not the "secret of" artistic production itself. On the contrary, it "makes us see, and therefore gives us in the form of '*seeing*', '*perceiving*' and '*feeling*' (which is not the form of *knowing*)—the ideology from which it is born, in which it bathes, from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it alludes. They (works of art) make us 'perceive' (but not know) in some sense *from the inside* by an *internal*

[18] *ibid.*, p. 158.

[19] Althusser, "Freud and Lacan", *op. cit.*, pp. 182-3.

[20] Or "alludes to" perhaps in Althusser (see below). The idiom here is also that of Adorno whose characteristic preoccupations are charted quite well by Peter Demetz in *Marx, Engels and the Poets* (Chicago, 1967), p. 235: Theodor W. Adorno—is above all concerned with the social implications of artistic forms; and it is characteristic that he does not regard highly the traditional metaphor of literature as the mirror of society. The cliché is shattered; the historico-philosophical "is deposited" (*sediementiert*) or precipitated and the form of the work of art "reminds of" or "converges to" sociological relationships.

[21] Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", *ibid.*, pp. 161-2-3.

[22] Althusser, "A Letter on Art in Reply to Andre Daspre", *ibid.*, p. 203.

[23] Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination", *op. cit.*, p. 109.

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distance, the very ideology in which they are held"[24]. The notion of distancing, like the related one of realisation, is familiar to critical practice. It is assumed that the ideology of a writer must be (in this use that derives its power from the very qualification wrought upon its meaning within the idealist problematic) *realised* or that realisation is not unconnected with such an internal *placing*. Consider, for example, Leavis writing about Lawrence's *Rainbow*:

> —Lawrence is not indulging in descriptive "lyricism" or writing poetically in order to generate atmosphere. Words here are used in the way, not of eloquence, but of creative poetry—they establish as an actual presence—create as part of the substance of the book—something that is essential to Lawrence's theme. The kind of intense apprehension of the unity of life that they evidence is as decidedly not in George Eliot's genius as it is of Lawrence's. It goes with his ability to talk about—to evoke—"blood-intimacy" and "blood-togetherness". It belongs, in short, to that aspect of his genius which made him in general repute (however absurdly) the prophet of the Dark Gods—the partisan of instinct against intelligence, the humane and the civilised.
>
> The very theme of *The Rainbow*—the essential creative interest and the informing conception—confutes that fallacy—The life of "blood-intimacy" that it (the quoted passage comprising the two paragraphs beginning "So the Brangwens came and went—" in chapter 1) plays its part in creating is, in the novel, a necessary and potent presence as something to be transcended. The novel has for theme the urgency, and the difficult struggle of the higher human possibilities to realise themselves.[25]

The extract brings out clearly the force of the idea of seeing ideology ("Lawrentianism") as a "sedimentation" in the novel "placed" by the "essential creative interest" and the *material dialectic* (shape) of the novel in which it forms a part; material, because as Leavis concludes, "no one who has read *The Rainbow* could call in question the legitimacy here of my 'higher' ". That is, it is *there* in the words deliniated by an act of criticism. For Leavis, the ethical realising alluded to (in the language of Victorian philosophy) must itself be realised (i.e. *materially there*).[26]

Auden on Man

But it is time to exhibit one of the homes of Marcuse's "literary ideology" and perhaps, in doing so, set ourselves a critical problem. It is the eighth sonnet in the sequence "Sonnets from China" by W. H. Auden originally published in *Journey to a War* (1937):

He turned his field into a meeting place,
And grew the tolerant ironic eye,
And formed the mobile money-changer's face,
And found the notion of equality.

And strangers were as brothers to his clocks,
And with his spires he made a human sky;
Museums stored his learning like a box,
And paper watched his money like a spy.

It grew so fast his life was overgrown,
And he forgot what once it had been made for,
And gathered into crowds and was alone,

And lived expensively and did without,
And could not find the earth which he had paid for,
Nor feel the love that he knew all about.[27]

The sequence is a "history" of man and its effect lies in its economy and in its abstract certainty. This sonnet is concerned with the excessive dominance of the reality principle and with its consequences; with the character of bourgeois man. Auden places a great strain on received notions of criticism and he steers statement close. As John Fuller says, " 'Sonnets from China' is Auden's *Essay on Man*" except that we are scarcely allowed to say, as we can, perhaps, in the case of Pope's poem that the "philosophy" is concretised in the poetry and a new dimension added; the relationship of the sonnet form to the "content" (i.e. precisely the pre-poetic ideology) is

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[24] Althusser, "A Letter on Art —," *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[25] F. R. Leavis, "The Novel as Dramatic Poem (VII) *The Rainbow* (I) "in *Scrutiny* vol. XVIII no. 3 (Cambridge, 1951/2) p. 200.

[26] The mention of Leavis has another value, for Leavis like Althusser is often accused of "insistent dogmatism". Both are concerned to provide critical readings which will define a centre and the circuitous style is (as it frequently is in others) part of the means used. This analogy, which is not without its own significance, can be reflected on in the context of Althusser's comments on reading a text in the opening of *For Marx*. He is concerned with drawing critical *distinctions* and "scholarly" objections to do with how many times the word "alienation" appears in *Capital* are as largely irrelevant as comparable objections were in the case of Leavis. Nevertheless it is a good idea to get your scholarship right. John Lewis's remark that Althusser never mentions the *Grundrisse* simply isn't true—c.f. *Lenin and Philosophy* p. 90, "The '*Grundrisse*' which date from the years 1857-9, are themselves profoundly marked by Hegel's thought, for in 1858 Marx had re-read the *Great Logic* with amazement" and, of course, elsewhere. It is, however, true that John Lewis never quotes Althusser—except by hearsay and, not surprisingly, he has little trouble with such rumours: "This story is a complete myth—"; "Althusser is wrong again"; "This is not the case—" etc.

[27] W. H. Auden, *Collected Shorter Poems* (London). The sequence was originally called "In Time of War".

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far from obvious. Indeed, one of the effects of the notorious Audenesque simile ("Museums stored his learning like a box") is to repudiate the usual functions of imagery to be other than statement; a denial of the evocative.

It is not uncommon, in Auden's generation, to quote in ideology (literary and otherwise) as cliché, and in this way to draw attention to the terms on which a culture is composed—amongst other things out of the fragmented philosophies of the past. Thus Beckett "distances" (in the Brechtian sense—one not answerable to the Althusserian strictures or the use of this word—*alienates*) the Cartesian ideology in which much of his work "bathes" by alerting us to its seeming "inevitability" within the resources of our "common-sense". But plainly we are expected to share in the truth of the "content" of Auden's poem; and yet there is something of the caricature about it. The repeated "ands" draw in with incisive strokes the sketch of bourgeois man; the poem seems to assert its own capacity for simplification, to enjoy its own trenchancy and condensation. We marvel (and are meant to—it *is part* of the poem) at the briskness with which it can all be put. *But such an effect turns on our knowing it all already.* In short, what is added to the "content" is a reminder of its own familiarity: the distancing is critical in the sense that, although the truth of the ideology is assumed, *attention is drawn to its character as ideology.*

"The existence of ideology and the interpellation of individuals as subjects are one and the same thing". The authorial stance within the poem is that of the teacher, the one who knows, but the identification with the impersonal voice of reason cannot, as it could in the eighteenth century, avoid the hint of self-mockery. The analytical confidence is conciously exaggerated and causes us not simply to recognise the truth of the poem but, like Sartre's voyeur, to catch ourselves recognising it.

This points, however, to another interesting disjunction—between the ideology of which Man is always the subject and the clinical tone of the poem with its insistent syntactic device of drawing attention to the subject by its absence, by the substitution of the personal pronoun. The philosophy is humanistic; it is familiar because it is about us, Man, "his field". Althusser belongs to a generation, that of Robbe-Grillet, in which some writers have seen it as their task to explore the possibilities of this disjunction further to use their art to the parodoxical (but not inhuman) purpose of creating ("*for us*") what, like the Grecian Urn, stands over and against the warmly human.

Discussion Contributions on:

The Crisis of Man and Environment

S. Jacoby

The very essence of Karl Marx's method of thinking is to see everything as in a constant state of change. How many followers of Marx go no further than Marx or perhaps Lenin did in their days in their analyses of society. Of course the analysis of capitalism by Marx and imperialism by Lenin still stands, but since then new factors have crept in unnoticed until recently, factors which have changed quality into quantity and now become the most important issues of all. Engels in *Dialectics of Nature* drew much of his philosophy from what was then a new factor in thinking—science. Ever since those days science has been gathering momentum and pouring out discoveries ever faster and faster. These discoveries have been made use of at an ever increasing pace by technology which in turn has changed the quality of life at an ever greater rate. In fact so great is the rate of change due to technology that sociologists have raised the question as to whether man can adapt himself to change as fast as technology makes it.

Nearly all politicians base their political theory and activity upon the study of economics. How many study science and technology which is today the great moving spirit of economic change? Is it really possible today to understand political events

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without watching scientific and technoloigcal progress? If not, then it is essential to read the scientific or at any rate the popular scientific press of which the *New Scientist* is possibly the most progressive and certainly the one which deals with technological sociology in a manner comprehensible to the layman.

What is it that the technological press and many of our leading scientists have laid before the public which is now becoming world problem No 1? Not one item but many are changing the quality of life for the worse and if not checked will destroy at least 500 million people in this decade or the next[1].

This is something on a far bigger scale than any previous war and must be looked at closely by everyone who thinks at all with a view to seeing what can be done to salvage the situation before it is too late. The causes of this are too many to deal with adequately in a short article but here is a very brief summary:—

The Land and the Sea

1. The methods of cultivation used by large scale agriculture are surely and steadily ruining the soil[2]. Professor Ehrlich states that unless millions of people get together to force the government to act against the pesticide and chemical manufacturers' lobby before the end of this decade, we shall have passed the point of no return.

2. The continued chemical pollution of rivers and the sea by industry is causing first the smaller seas (e.g. Caspian and Baltic) to become lifeless and is on its way to destroy life even in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.[3] This not only means destruction of the fish (also taking place by overfishing by the big monopolies in competition with one another), but it has a much more important effect. Four years ago *The Times* printed an article on the growth of DDT in sea water. The main cleanser of the atmosphere from the products of combustion of fuel and regeneration of oxygen is the ubiquitous alga known as Cherella—a tiny plant in the ocean plantation. DDT inhibits the photosynthesis (or cleansing of the air) by Chlorella. Said *The Times*, 10 parts of DDT per billion in the sea is enough to completely inhibit the life process of Chlorella. Four years ago *The Times* said that there was already one part per billion of DDT in sea water in remote parts of the Pacific. DDT has been used on a large scale for about 25 years. The US government (the USA was the principal polluter) drastically cut the use of DDT. So the manufacturers marketed Dieldrin instead which is eight to 15 times more poisonous than DDT.

Lead Poisoning

3. The effects of lead poisoning have been published several times recently by the *New Scientist*, which says there is no safe level of lead in the human body. Much research is being done in the USA to find out how to modify petrol engines to make them work without the additon of lead ethyl to petrol, but the work is inconclusive. Meanwhile in England the *Guardian* has just published a very simple addition to a petrol engine which not only makes the addition of lead ethyl to petrol unnecessary but eliminates nitric oxide and much of the unburnt hydrocarbons from motor exhausts. Basically this consists of a coil of copper tubing from a small water tank turned round the exhaust to enable a small quantity of steam to be passed into the carburetter—a simple do-it-yourself job. An immediate campaign should be organised to make this addition compulsory by a fixed date. This is an immediate possibility which would be welcomed rather than resisted by the manufacturers.

Fall Out and Consequence of Atomic War

4. Fall out from nuclear bombs, radio active waste from nuclear power stations and above all, the possibility of a serious accident in a nuclear station or nuclear waste processing plant could render very large areas of countryside lethal. As the number of nuclear power plants grows, the probability of a serious accident in one of them also grows.[4] This is far more serious in the USA where the power industry is privately owned. In England the maximum precautions are taken but so they are on the railway, yet. . . .

5. The escape of new virus diseases from research institutes such as Porton could and has very nearly on several occasions led to a rapidly spreading outbreak of a new plague.[5]

6. The possibility of atomic war and the consequences are well known to everyone. We are so used to thinking that our statesmen have more sense that no-one expects it to happen. Professor Ehrlich however points out that the military industrial complexes (which Eisenhower exposed in his retiring presidential speech) are actually anticipating thermonuclear war. To quote Ehrlich: "The industrial military complex . . . is discussing its advantages and planning to survive and rebuild a wonderful anti-communist system afterwards.

[1] Paul Ehrlich *The Population Bomb*, Pan Books, 40p also William and Paul Paddock 1967, *Famine-1975!*. Little, Brown & Co., Boston & Toronto.

[2] *New Scientist* 16-9-71, "Profile of Ehrlich".

[3] This is well explained in numerous books on Marine Biology e.g. *The Frail Ocean* by Wesley Marx Ballantine Environmental Books, 40p.

[4] *Perils of the Peaceful Atom* by Richard Curtis & Elizabeth Hogan. (Gollancz).

[5] *How to be a Survivor: A Plan to save Spaceship Earth*. Paul Ehrlich. Pan Books. 40p.

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They point out that Hiroshima is completely recovered and prosperous today. . . . But they worry about too many survivors causing a labour-capital imbalance. They have built underground retreats and data storage facilities. One bank, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, has detailed plans for collecting outstanding debts after the attack". The Common Market also intends to form its own industrial military complex. And the Japanese?

Ehrlich in his proposals for a new and better world, states that the Department of the Environment must be given the absolute veto over the military.

7. The ecological imbalance caused by mans' activities and the consequences is too big a subject to be dealt with here. It is adequately dealt with in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* and by the famous Scottish ecologist Fraser Darling who broadcast warnings similar to Ehrlich at the Reith Lectures for 1970, and of course by many others.

Expansion of Power and Production

8. An expanding industry means a growth in the combustion of fuel. The US power industry for example plans the doubling of the output of power every ten years! At this rate it would take 200 years to cover the whole surface of the USA with power stations! The industry plans not only an expanding number of consumers but a steady growth in the amount of power used per person! In this respect, the British Gas & Electricity Boards are not far behind. An area of countryside the size of Cambridgeshire disappears under concrete every ten years at the present rate of building. More combustion and less green plants to regenerate the atmosphere. How soon will we reach the point where the process becomes irreversible?

9. One of the most unnecessary causes of pollution is the enormous waste in the present consumer society. (It is interesting to know that the German Democratic Republic does not intend to develop a mass consumer society on Western lines). Not only packaging but the manufacture of goods with built-in redundancy causes a vast and unnecessary pollution. Plastics and aluminium manufacture are heavy polluters. Ehrlich recommends that all containers must be returnable by law.

The expansion of production clearly cannot go on beyond a certain point. Many ecologists think we have exceeded this already and that a cut in production is necessary. Is this possible under Capitalism? As the time required for doing this is so limited can we afford to wait for a Socialist planned economy before taking action? Ehrlich says that once we can really convince the heads of the Establishment that unless this is done (together with the other necessary measures) we will certainly die—all of us, then these bureaucrats will not want to die either. The longer it is left the more draconic will be the measures that will *HAVE* to be taken. Ehrlich's proposals for a much simplified life are interesting.

Population Explosion

Now we come to the really important contradiction and the really important difficulty. Just when we have reached or possibly passed the limit of the earth's resources, just when we are on the verge of famine through destruction of the soil by modern intensive methods of cultivation, the population explosion is growing faster than ever before. The average rate is now to double itself in 35 years. This means not only twice as much food, but twice as much manufacture with double the pollution, twice as much building with reduction of green areas and food production, twice as much transport etc. For the population to double in another 35 years (actually the rates for doubling the population have become shorter and shorter) means an exponential growth (like compound interest). Is this possible? If not what will happen? How many people will die? Ehrlich estimates at least 500 million in the expected famine. Starving people are much more susceptible to disease and plague—especially in overcrowded conditions.

So a start must be made as soon as possible in cutting the birth rate so that it is first equal to the death rate and then reducing it still further till the optimum population is reached—maybe 1.5 to 2 thousand million. This is an extremely difficult programme to carry out. India has experienced complete failure and is heading for disaster on a scale which cannot be tackled. A clear exposition of the case, the difficulties and recommendations are given in *The Population Bomb*, Paul Ehrlich, Pan Books, 30p.

Marx and Malthus

It is now necessary to look back at the controversy between Marx and Malthus. In Marx's day there was no population problem. Marx knew that Malthus' predictions would be used against the economic interests of the working class, hence his opposition to Malthus. Marx, however, always checked his economic predictions against published figures at a later date and admitted his mistakes when they occurred. Is it likely that so great a thinker would if he lived today, argue alongside the Catholic Church against measures to check the population explosion—now a fact that no one can ignore?

There are people claiming to be Marxists who refuse to take the population problem into account because Marx in his day and age refuted Malthus! Have these people not interpreted Marx in the manner of a fundamentalist interpreting the bible?

The permitted length of this article allows but a mere introduction to the subject. It is intended to

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show that the study of this and that action resulting from this study is obligatory on everyone. Ehrlich[6] not only outlines what should be done as soon as possible but he tells you exactly how the ordinary person can help. Many books have been written on the danger of the destruction of the environment. At first they were technical problems written for technical people. Now the scientists are crying out to the public for help to fight the political battle to prevent the destruction of mankind. Foremost of these are Professor Paul Ehrlich in the USA and Frazer Darling in England, to mention only two of many. The "World Wildlife Fund" is concerned with the destruction of the environment of plants, animals and man.

At the outset of Conservation Year 1970, the *New Scientist* warned that the big industrialists would (like the tobacco manufacturers) cause some scientists to write articles and books proving that everything in the garden is lovely and that there is no overpopulation (they only deal with this in respect to food production and ignore the effect on quality of life and environment). I will only mention one book that appears to me to do this, because it is always necessary to read your opponent's case. Lenin always did—*Starvation or Plenty* by Colin Clark (Secker & Warburg, £1.50).

Lines of Action

I would like to suggest one form of campaign which appears feasible but I have not yet seen in print. The UCS shop stewards have shown how to exert real power in industry to a degree never seen in this country before. If the Shop Stewards really were convinced that industrial pollution is one of the factors that could certainly kill us all, there is a great deal they could do to stop it. For example they could refuse to allow a firm to dump scrap metals containing lead cadmium mercury etc. in the open where rain can wash traces into the river. They could refuse to allow poisons to be dumped into sewage and rivers till these substances had been properly removed or destroyed. There must be a great many things upon which scientists and technicians could inform shop stewards for action.

Lastly progressive scientists have for some time been discussing a code of ethics similar to that of doctors to prevent scientists from collaborating with business interests to the detriment of the environment and quality of life. This discussion is being published by the *New Scientist*.

It was, strangely enough, Stalin who pointed out that Party members of long standing often lost the sense of the new. Scientists are now providing the new and calling on the support of progressive politicains. Are all Marxists going to join in or will some of them relegate it to an issue of secondary importance and sink as some Party Branches have done to the level of the Socialist Party of Great Britain?

All Marxists would benefit by a careful but critical study of the Communist Party's resolution on Pollution at the last Congress. They might also study the programme of the Conservation Society,[7] Friends of the Earth[8] and World Wild Life Fund.[9] Other organisations are also springing up to cope with these problems.

[6] *How to be a Survivor: A Plan for Spaceship Earth*, also *The Population Bomb*. Both Pan Books 40p and 30p.

[7] Conservation Society: Sec. 21 Hanyards Lane, Cuffley, Potters Bar, Herts.

[8] Friends of the Earth, 8 King Street, London, W.C.2.

[9] World Wild Life Fund. Plumtree Court, London, E.C.4.

H. J. Brown

The thoughtful and penetrating article by John Cox and Richard Hayter in the September issue of *Marxism Today* and J. R. Horth's additional work on this subject mark a great step forward in the theoretical development necessary for the tasks ahead. I should like to add a few further points.

While an approach that takes account of the whole situation has always been an essential of Marxism, this has been given less prominence in the last two decades in Britain, partly because of the speed and variety of change and technological development in certain directions, the increasing complexity of political forms and situations in this phase of decaying capitalism, the development of new forms of exploitation and the nature at this time of what Teilhard de Chardin calls the noosphere—the atmosphere of ideas, concepts, myths and theories that sustains our mental activity just as the biosphere sustains our physical life. Because so many changes were involved, it has been difficult to extract and

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examine the new factors, to study their relation to the old and develop creative theory, test it in practice, develop it further on the results and apply it again. One might almost say that it has been hard enough to interpret the world, never mind change it, if that were not precisely the sort of undialectical separation of the two that leads us into sterile theory and blind action.

Past Mistakes

A lot of this loss of ground theoretically in Britain has come from failure to query the basic false axiom of capitalism about what affluence is, and to fight hard for real elements in the standard of living. As long as we measure affluence by possession of certain material objects, we are walking blindfold.

Today a more accurate knowledge of the real world is beginning: but if we had not let ourselves be sidetracked on to individual possessions so much and had fought harder for the communal elements of the standard of living, not only would the political situation be better, but there probably would not be such a serious problem of pollution.

The Third Industrial Revolution

Freedom is the knowledge of necessity. This applies to a bigger necessity now and will lead to bigger freedom than ever before in history, since it is a question of consciously changing the whole basis of production to ecologically sound methods, not simply changing the social and economic relations to suit a system of production that was already there, as with the change from slavery to feudalism, from feudalism to capitalism and from capitalism to socialism, until now. The first industrial revolution was based on the use of coal and steam, the second on electronics, atomic power and the production of man made molecules that nature cannot recycle. The third industrial revolution will have to be carried out consciously, unlike the other two, which consisted of many different developments, made for their own sakes and not as part of an overall plan of technical development, although the pattern is clear to us now. The third industrial revolution must be carried out on a global scale: it will make use of all knowledge about the environment, all sciences, all observations, from simple arithmetic about the space needed for different forms of transport to knowledge of man's most complicated metabolisms. It will have to deal with the toxic legacy of the second industrial revolution and will conserve things wasted at the moment harmfully and unnecessarily, like water, soil and minerals, oxygen and vegetative wealth, and also man's energies, health and life. The beginnings of these processes are already appearing: some firms are recycling waste without creating new unrecyclable waste, there is the interest in organic farming in the USSR and the care and conservation of water there; but these are very small samples of the elimination of waste and total recycling that will be necessary to leave enough for succeeding generations.

The using up of the forests for fuel precipitated the first industrial revolution and the running down of coal and oil reserves gave impetus to the development of atomic energy in the second; the third is made necessary by the blocking of the processes of change and decay and rebirth in the natural cycle, the putting of lots of substances into the wrong places for the continuation of life and the final understanding that the world is round and finite.

At the moment effluent from pulp mills on Lake Baikal is oxygenated to reduce pollution—this is second industrial revolution technology. In a few years' time the mills will go over to closed cycle use of water and no effluent will go into the lake at all—this is third industrial revolution technology. In some countries, the right technique might be to close down the mill and let the trees go on growing, on the view that the trees were more ecologically useful than the advertisements printed on the paper made from them.

The Superstructure

Just as the first industrial revolution was accompanied by the spread of literacy and the second by the spread of specialised scientific knowledge, so the third industrial revolution will be accompanied by the development of a new way of thought. It is already appearing. It is distinguished by the following features (a) deeper analysis (b) consciousness of the whole situation (c) consciousness of change and movement and the need to take direction of change into account. This will affect every body of knowledge.

For example, in economics the first casualty will be that mystical entity, the GNP. There may be some point in measuring production like this in a socialist society,* where people have decided what they want and planned the production of so much of this and that to meet real needs. But it is just a jumble, a vast dump of good and bad, useful, useless and harmful under capitalist production. In needs deeper analysis. It tells you nothing to know that it is 8 per cent bigger or smaller this year than last. You want to know how much consisted of football pool coupons, how much of bread or electric light bulbs, how much of trains and how much of tranquillisers. The USSR has been busy catching up on steel production with the USA for the last decade, but I have never seen

* Although as Maurice Dobb shows in "Socialist Planning: Some Problems", there can be difficulties within the sections of the plan similar in nature to the vagueness of the decaying capitalist concept of the GNP.

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any of their spokesmen or writers pointing out that the figures are not very comparable in terms of real use since so much American steel will be rusting around the countryside in the form of discarded cars with built-in obsolescence in another year or two and some will go to make refrigerators that would not be needed if those made five years ago had been built to last properly. This might be termed the Unnecessary Replacement Factor.

The Different Kinds of Work

A distinguishing feature of monopoly capitalism in decay is the proliferation of unnecessary processes that come between people and their needs, each process being justified to monopoly capitalism because it makes a profit, i.e. extracts more surplus from the working people for the big monopolies. Where it makes a profit for a smaller concern, the smaller concern is taken over and the surplus value passed on to the big monopolies or the unnecessary work is passed on to the consumer, thereby keeping him from dangerous activity like thinking, socialist agitation or reading something that might stir up dangerous thoughts. Just as the word freedom was distorted and a new content smuggled in in the last century in the development of capitalism, so that its meaning in practice passed from "freedom from the restraints of feudal and aristocratic government" to "freedom to exploit", so the word "work" has been twisted in the last quarter century—for very good reasons, since respect for work as creating all wealth threatened to blow away the capitalist system. Now any activity that is paid is given the moral halo of work—while the same activity, if unpaid, is of course not work; and this has sown a great deal of confusion, which has weakened our position, and divided people.

The only way to disentangle the confusion caused in so many fields by blindly accepting the worship of the cash nexus as an addition to the thesis that the workers by hand and brain produce everything, is to distinguish socially useless, socially useful and socially harmful work, which means ecologically useless, useful or harmful work, and base economic thinking on these. The fact that there may be no neat borderline does not mean that the general distinction cannot be made—we must take analysis ever deeper and take more and more factors into account.

At the moment the word "economic" means producing profit for the dominant monopolies now or very soon. This will have to be disinfected also before it can be used in the third industrial revolution, and meantime we might make use of the term "ecologically economic" to mean "giving the best value for the whole people for the foreseeable future" and, from another point of view, maximising the amount of socially useful processes and minimising the amount of socially harmful and useless processes. The trade unionist who said at the TUC that the UCS were right to insist on the work going on because they were building ships that could use any harbour in the world was an ecological economist, whether he knew it or not. The giant oil tankers that do not fit into the geography of the world we live in are "economic" in the capitalist sense (for the Lithgow shareholders), but they are ecologically less economic than smaller, more adaptable ships in view of the natural factor of storms at sea.

Once a new body of economic theory in which the market has been replaced by the survival of mankind has been developed, a great many interesting new ideas will emerge, which will themselves stimulate further action, and hasten socialism.

As there will be no place for violence or clumsiness in securing a viable ecological balance, there may well be considerable psychological change in people—less competitiveness and more co-operation, less cult of personality, greater precision and delicacy in everything and less obsessiveness and tendency to domineer.

Immediate Action

I suggest that consideration of the following questions might form the basis of a symposium, composed as far as possible of people who are already engaged in some form of struggle to save the environment and therefore have some contribution based on practice to make:

(1) What new features are there in the present crisis that did not exist before?
(2) What are the characteristics of pollution of different kinds?
(3) What knowledge is available that could deal with any of it and is not being applied?
(4) What further lines of enquiry could be initiated to find methods of dealing with any of it?
(5) What measures can be fought for now? With what organisations?
(6) How can other people be drawn into action and made aware of the Marxist contribution? (a) people with whom comrades are already in touch over other things? (b) Other people?
(7) What can the trade unions do?
(8) What can the Co-operative movement do?
(9) What can the individual do in his personal life to set an example and to reduce pollution?

Further symposia, drawing in more and more people could then be held, with everyone going away pledged to action suitable to his ability and circumstances.

The time is perhaps also ripe for a conference of conservation, reform, amenity "n" kindred societies —to immortalise one of the famous last words of decaying capitalism.

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Strategy of Socialist Revolution in Britain

Alan Spence

Over the years our theoretical work has become less and less creative; consequently, our practical work began to suffer and our role as the vanguard of the working-class has waned. This weakness is illustrated in *The British Road to Socialism* and the opening up of it for discussion, initiated by the contribution from Comrade Pearce, could not be more appropriate.

Firstly, on wages. It should be recognised that wage bargaining has changed. Piecework is dying and the weekly wage (MDW) taking its place. Yet this was never recognised in our main, popular text-book, John Eaton's *Political Economy*. He states p. 89 "Workers' experience through many decades has shown that piecewages are always in the end fixed at wages which are based on time-wages. . . ." Everyone concerned with industry knows (or should know) that for the past decade the opposite of this has been true. Day wages STROVE to keep up with piecewages.

Ironically, though that quotation was wrong in my 1963 edition, it is coming true today. For technology has outmoded piecework, and the employers, quicker than we to see this, outwitted the unions and the Party into accepting a new wages system, largely on the employers terms.

However the shop stewards are fighting back and are empirically evolving, on the basis of their practical experience, a wage system that will provide the benefits of piecework. For example, since the docks changed from piecework to MDW production has slumped because the incentive has gone out of the job. It is impossible to go back to the old piece-work form. Therefore, the employers, compelled by necessity, and the unions, by the desire to improve conditions for their members, are groping towards some form of profits division.

And this is so because wage determinations emerge as necessary laws of political economy and, as such, they are deducible by the application of marxist methodology. That the Party did not lead theoretically during this period in which the workers spontaneously took advantage of favourable conditions to triumph over the employers in the manipulation of the piecework system, and that it doesn't lead now, is a matter so disturbing that we simply cannot let it go unchecked.

This neglect and failure to come up with the new arises because we treat things as static and not as in motion. We pay lip service to the concept of development—and that's as far as we go!

The chief characteristic of Marxist philosophy is its capacity to pinpoint the new, the emerging. Yet prognosis is one of our gravest weaknesses.

Indispensable for understanding trends of development is the capacity to have assimilated the relation between the categories of Form and Content. Yet, almost all our works are descriptive. The content of the subject is outlined with great wealth, but the form in which this content manifests itself is almost totally disregarded. And, more importantly, new forms are hardly touched upon.

A case in point is our treatment of State Forms, Planning, and Economies. It is clear that a new law is emerging into the science of political economy, and this is the Law of Regional Development. But little or no weight is given to this law; and what there is, is contradictory. Page 62 *The Birtish Road* says, for example, ". . . to vest more power in regional and local councils." On p. 61 ". . . regional councils would plan for economic and social development throughout the region. Page 57 " . . plans in *consultation* with bodies at all levels—financial and industrial, regional, local . . . etc." A scrutiny of such examples reveals that we cannot make up our minds whether a Region is to have power or whether it is to be consultative.

This falling between two stools arises because we see the limitations of the British capitalist state structure and, because we have not worked the problem out theoretically; we plumped for the unitary planning structure appropriate to the Soviet Union.

Differing Levels

What we failed to take into account was the differing levels of economic development between the two countries. To industrialise, the Soviet Union had to mobilise and concentrate on certain key sectors. Therefore the administrative method and strict rationing appropriate for them would have snarled up the British economy because we had already bypassed our "stage of primitive development". If it wouldn't have worked then for us, its absolutely certain it wouldn't work now.

Therefore we have to re-think our economic policy, and, in doing this, we shall see that Regionalism is the key to a higher level of development. And

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this is so because though the bourgeoisie define the nation, in exploiting that nation they simply skim the cream from its most easily developed sectors. As soon as more lucrative areas begin to pull, Capital, being mobile, rushes off to gnaw at richer pickings. To facilitate this purpose, and to extricate themselves from the chaos resulting from their pursuit of the maximum profit, the unitary state was evolved.

However, under socialism, the nation becomes fulfilled and this is so because once the extensive development ("primitive industrial accumulation") of a nation is completed, the task then becomes one of intensive development. And for this purpose Regional government is the only form capable of meeting the needs.

The relation between the central government and the region should be based upon the principle of *co-ordination*. As a matter of fact this principle should operate throughout the whole socialist state structure, with the higher bodies co-ordinating lower bodies: parish, borough, city, region (or province) and nation, with the Nation outlining the perspective for the whole and orientating the economic and social forces to that perspective.

Another oddity that appears in the BRS is that we were supposed to be planning for the future, but, in fact, we balk at difficulties. Page 42 states "Whatever the best relationship finally worked out between the Welsh and Scottish Parliaments . . . etc." Yet this isn't a problem which lies in the misty future, but exists with us right here and now! So if we are not able theoretically to solve this problem at this stage, where do we suppose we shall obtain the capacity to do so in the future?

Weakness in Prognosis

Again we go back to our prognostic weakness. We describe the problem, but our philosophical ineptitude bars us from discerning the trends and therefore recognising that these movements will manifest themselves in a Federal form with a Federal State co-ordinating the activities of the National Governments.

It is now also clear that a further law has emerged into the theory of political economy, and this is the Law of the Formation of Common Markets.

We make the error of closing our eyes to obvious economic development and in our correct opposition to the EEC fail to recognise that three formations have appeared in Europe; CMEA, EEC, and EFTA. Each of these has emerged as the necessary form to overcome the backwardness, deficiencies and limitations of national economies. Because of the flux and flow of history, peculiarities appear in the process of formation that give them the appearance of being chance arrangements. But the essence of the matter is that they are the working out of an economic form which will provide a higher form of UNITY than the national economy. Furthermore they are the means for the transition to still higher forms preceding the development to the World Economy.

From this we see that the opposition to EEC by the British Party is correct, while the general support given to it by the Continental Parties is also correct. But where we do fall down is in not supporting the development of EFTA in a socialist direction and, in furtherance of this, convening a meeting of EFTA Communist Parties to prepare a joint programme.

To sum up briefly. *The British Road to Socialism* needs re-writing from the standpoint of the methodological unravelling of the basic political and economic trends in our society. We are not doing this, hence our policy becomes more and more meaningless.

We are degenerating into nothing more than a Sociological Party; fighting against attacks on the working class, striving for improvements in housing, hospitals, and for world peace. And in this we have no edge on the left in the Labour Party except our organisation and unity. Hence it is that left Labour and trades unionists see no inherent need for the Party and for Marxism as a Science. And from this follows the growing divorcement between the trade unions and Marxism. The Communism Party is more than just a compiler of the sociological needs of the working-class: it shows how to create a socialist Society. And it can do this because it is equipped with a theoretical method that enables it to get to the root of problems and from there illuminate the way forward.

Recent history shows that Communist Parties can become temporarily estranged from the working class; therefore, we have to recognise, without equivocation, that our policy may not live up to its claim. If this is so, then we must undertake the most searching reappraisal—at the end of which we can again resume our march to Socialism.

continued from page 275

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